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SPRING 1935
VOL. 4. NO. 13

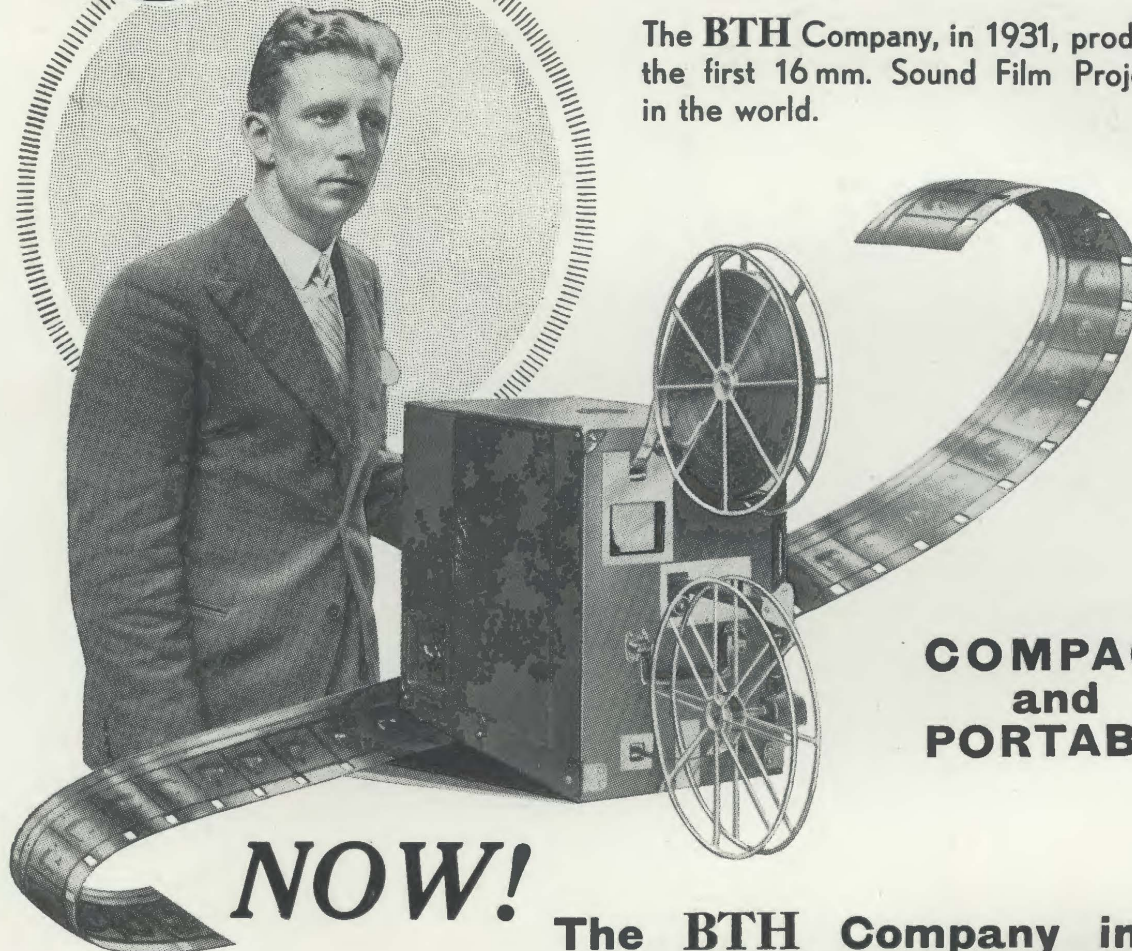


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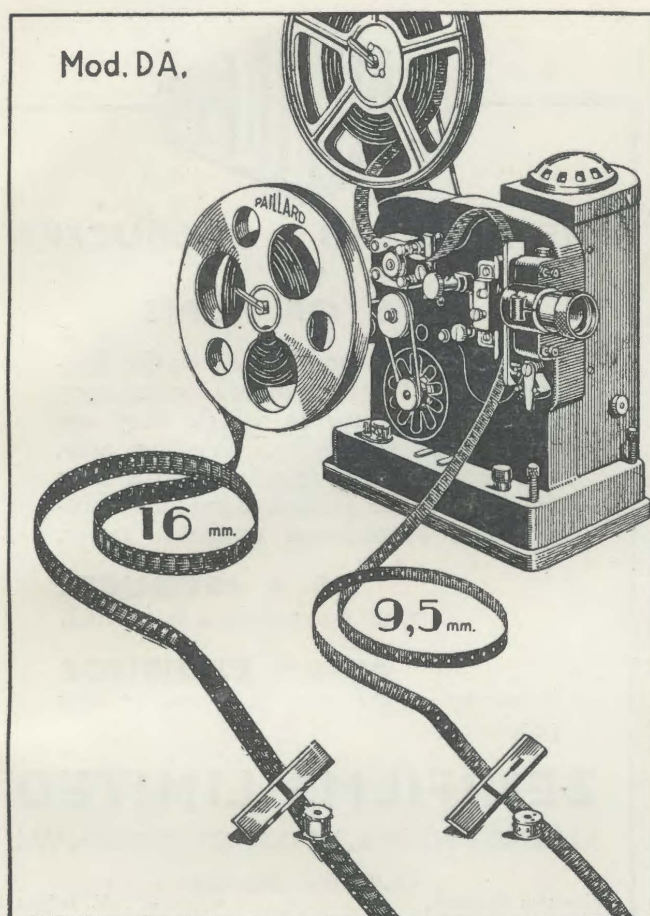
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SIGHT & SOUND

Sole Advertisement
Agents :
MESSRS. AUBREY
W. HAMMOND & CO.
Fulwood House,
High Holborn,
London, W.C.1.

Telephone :
Chancery 7850, 7080.

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

VOLUME 4, No. 13

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MEDICAL EDUCATION BY THE FILM

IT was recently reported in the press that a film had been hurried out to Kenya which, by enabling the surgeon to see how to perform a major operation, had been the means of saving a man's life. This is an episode which is picturesque and exciting enough to catch the public interest ; but although the event is one which may happen only once in a lifetime, the idea of medical education by means of the film is not new. Films are being used all over the country to-day in medical schools, universities and hospitals, and although their value is not so strikingly apparent as in the case reported, their general utility makes them worthy of equal recognition. The possibilities of medical education by film are not so generally discussed as the possibilities of teaching geography or natural

science or history by the same means, since the nature of most of the films makes them unsuitable for exhibition to public audiences. But there is no branch of knowledge in which the film can act as a greater benefactor to mankind.

In addition to the films which have been made by commercial companies on medical subjects, many lecturers have made films to suit the individual needs of their own work, sometimes a mere strip of little more than 100 feet, often untitled, but invaluable to the author. It was in the belief that such films would be of the greatest service to others engaged in similar work, that the British Film Institute through its Medical Panel undertook an extensive enquiry, covering all medical schools and universities in the country. It has endeavoured

to secure particulars of all the films which have been made privately in this way, and by issuing a classified and annotated list, and so making their source and availability known, to extend their utility immeasurably. In passing, tribute must be paid to Messrs. Kodak and their library of medical films, a number of which have been included in the Institute's catalogue.

It is popularly supposed that of all the branches of medicine, surgery affords the greatest scope so far as the film is concerned. The hand of the master surgeon can be seen at close quarters by *every* student at the lecture; movements which may be imperceptible owing to the speed with which they have to be performed on the operating table, can be followed easily by the aid of slow motion photography. It is indeed true that a very large number of the films which have come to the notice of the Institute have dealt with surgery. But a glance at the divisions of the catalogue which are noted elsewhere in this issue of SIGHT AND SOUND will be sufficient to prove that films have been made to assist instruction in a variety of other branches of medicine. Dr. Canti's film showing the action of radium in building up the cells of the body attacked by cancer, and Dr. Harrison's films on venereal diseases are two examples.

The subject is one which is now occupying international attention. The International Institute of Educational Cinematography at Rome has conceived the idea of compiling a cine-medical encyclopaedia which will demonstrate the best practice in medicine, surgery, public health and other subjects of technical interest to medical practitioners and students. International collaboration has been invited in this task, and the Medical Panel of the Institute is co-operating in its production. The Panel is conscious of its great responsibility in this matter, and has given considerable thought to the production of medical films. As has been pointed out by the Rome Institute in commenting upon the making of medical films, "the productions have not been all that they might have been; the truth is that so far no precise basis of work and of assembling

the necessary cinematograph material has existed in a national or an international domain." The Medical Panel is in agreement with this statement, and it has been clear to them, as they state in the introduction to their catalogue that sometimes an otherwise good film "would have had its teaching value improved out of hand by the inclusion of some appropriate captions and/or moving diagrams which would enable the audience to see 'the firewood in the forest.'" In these and other ways in the past very much labour and material have been wasted by producers, both amateur and professional, through lack of guidance, and one of the aims of the British Film Institute's Medical Panel is to prevent such waste in future by helping with advice those embarking on the production of medical films.

In the meantime, the Panel has collected information on the British medical films already in existence as a preliminary step before giving considered guidance on the international question; it issues its catalogue in the hope that "it may prove useful to those in search of films of medical interest, and thus be a means of extending the use in this country of a method of medical education that deserves far more attention than it appears so far to have received."

Scarborough Film School Scholarship

SIGHT AND SOUND is offering to its readers a Scholarship to attend the Scarborough Film School, the first of its kind to be held in this country. The Scholarship is offered in the hope that readers will regard it as an opportunity to put forward their views on the film. They are limited to no special approach, for it is felt that they will more readily discuss a subject which they themselves regard as important and in which they themselves are interested. The contributions will be the more valuable on that account, as indicating the aspects of cinematography which are receiving attention by the general public to-day.

Full particulars of the Scholarship will be found on page 45.

Katharine Hepburn and
John Beal in *THE LITTLE
MINISTER* (Radio)



NOTES OF THE QUARTER

Berlin Film Congress

Important questions are to be discussed at an International Film Congress which is being held in Berlin from April 25th to May 1st, 1935. Production, renting and exhibition of films, film archives and standardisation of sub-standard films are amongst the subjects which are to be considered from an international point of view. The Congress is being organised under the auspices of the Reichsfilmkammer which has invited representation from the British Film Institute.

Censorship and Televised Films

The problem of censorship which is likely to arise when films are televised is discussed by Mr. Basil Dean in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* of February 12th. Mr. Dean foresees difficulties in the granting of a television monopoly to the B.B.C. and censorship, he says, is not the least of them. He suggests that "a fully accredited official Censor should be appointed, responsible through the Home Secretary to the Government . . . The Censor should have the assistance of a small expert Appeal Committee of three members, presided over by an independent chairman; one member appointed by the film producers, one by the B.B.C. and the third member to represent the general public.

"All producers of films should have the right of

appeal to this Committee in cases where the official Censor found himself unable to grant any licence . . .

"I would not favour a permanent official as Censor, but rather a short-term appointment—say of three years—to avoid the staleness inherent in a longer tenure of office. The same would apply to the viewers of films employed by the Censor's office; and their qualifications would also need to be held in strict review.

"I should favour the carrying out of the Censor's duties through the offices of the Film Institute," which, says Mr. Dean, "is obviously already the most suitable consultative body to which to refer the licensing of all educational, scientific and historical films, be they for television purposes or otherwise."

Venice Film Exhibition

British film producing companies will have another opportunity of proving what this country can do. As a Biennial event the International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art would normally be held in 1936, but so successful was the Exhibition of 1934 that it has been decided to proceed with plans for a 1935 Exhibition. Last year a British picture gained the maximum award in the competition, Mussolini's Gold Challenge Cup for the best foreign (i.e., non-Italian) film. The award was regarded as a tribute to British production generally

and as significant of the great advance made by British films. It is hoped that all British producing firms will take part this year in order that this country may be adequately represented.

Film as Instrument of Unperceived Propaganda

We are not sure whether alarm or admiration ought to predominate in our reception of the news that a process is being worked out for making the film into an instrument of unperceived propaganda. It is an attempt to influence the subconscious mind *directly*, by means of films which, as far as the audience is aware, are no different from ordinary films. Upon them, however, is super-imposed a simple message to be conveyed through the eye to the subconscious mind. The message is given no opportunity to reach the conscious mind *via* the brain, owing to a system of colour-contrast whereby the message on one frame is cancelled out by succeeding frames. For the past year Mr. H. J. R. Lister has been working upon this scheme which he calls the "Lister Process of Synoptical Kinepsychotherapy and Kinesynoptical Multisuggestion." It is not proven or perfected, but Mr. Lister hopes to announce success within the next four months.

Mr. Lister believes that in receiving suggestions in the form of these short "invisible" messages, the subconscious mind will react in accordance with the terms of such suggestion. Mr. Lister claims that the success of this experiment would mean

that we should have an entirely new method of curative treatment for individual nervous and mental cases, and that entire audiences could by the same method be brought to desire International Peace and Disarmament, etc. It would be equally possible, of course, to influence audiences to less desirable ends, and we can well appreciate Mr. Lister's, fear lest, when the process is perfected, it should fall into wrong hands.

Raising the Standard of Public Taste

The influence of the alert and intelligent section of the community is an important factor in raising the standard of public taste in films. In an address at the Town Hall, Eastbourne, on Monday, February 4th, Mr. Lambert explained how the British Film Institute was endeavouring to bring together, through its branches, groups of persons all over the country who were interested in the encouragement of good films and who would make their influence felt by patronising these films. Mr. Lambert hoped that in every important town a branch of the Institute would be established which could in this way assist in the effort to raise the standard of public appreciation of films.

India's First Film Exhibition

Although the film industry in India is only in its early development, it has recently shown signs of rapid progress, a fact which was referred to by Sir M. Vishweshwarayya in opening India's first Film Exhibition at Bombay in February last.

Sir M. Vishweshwarayya discussed some of the ways in which he thought the Government might encourage the industry. He said that it might come forward, for instance, to provide the equipment and training necessary for the manufacture of films and machinery within the country itself, and he suggested that young persons should be given scholarships to study the industry in foreign countries. He also felt that in accordance with the recommendation of the Indian Cinematography Committee of 1927-28 a certain percentage of films in every show should be educational.

The Exhibition was organised by the Motion Picture Society of India and included wireless and photography as well as cinematography.



Freddie Bartholomew as David, and Roland Young as Uriah Heep. From *DAVID COPPERFIELD*, by Cukor (M-G-M)

ALEXANDER KORDA:

A SKETCH

By C. A. Lejeune

TO anyone who writes with any regularity about the cinema, the name of Alexander Korda is a recurring cipher. Hardly a week goes by in which there is not some new activity to report in connection with this unaccountable entrepreneur; an activity, mark you, of such public interest that no self-respecting journalist could let it go past unrecorded.

Korda is one of those picturesque people who are the newspaperman's delight. Everything he does is good copy; it is infinitely worth doing and it is done with a swing. No undertaking is too difficult or too unusual for him. He may look at the story of Evolution and say, "All right. We make it." He will hear of the exploits of some world celebrity in painting or music or literature, and say, "All right. He works for us." And even his wildest enterprises have such an unaccountable way of turning out right, that no man in his senses can afford to call Korda a fool.

It is fashionable in the film industry, since Korda is so very successful on such apparently insufficient grounds, to regard him as what the Americans call "phoney," to suspect him of being something other than he seems. The favourite game in the industry is to make Korda bankrupt, or failing that to suggest that he is a "one-picture man," or that somebody else should take the credit for even that one picture. But the fact remains that Korda is very far from bankrupt, that he goes on making successful pictures, and that he has done more for the world credit of the British film industry in his few short years of office than any other man in the trade.

The public, I am aware, are not deeply interested in trade personalities, but I fancy they must sometimes give a curious thought to Korda, wondering



Alexander Korda

what sort of a person this is who plays ducks and drakes with film history and gets himself into the columns of the national press more frequently than many a Hollywood star.

Your first impression of Korda is that he is an anachronism. He should have been a patron of the Renaissance arts in mediaeval Italy instead of a modern film executive, pacing the office floor as he talks, smoking, in endless succession, his continental cigars. All his instincts are those of the connoisseur; he is a reader of books, a spectator of plays, a critic of the graphic arts. Tall, spare, quiet, in his early forties, with glasses that hide the thought in the eyes behind, and something leonine in the head and gait—that is the physical picture of Korda.

But if you should be persuaded, from these appearances, to take him for a dilettante and a highbrow, you are likely to be woefully deceived. This bland Hungarian, who has lived through five revolutions in as many countries, known men and women of every type and profession, and carved a career for himself in the face of every kind of discouragement and disability, is as shrewd a practical film-maker as you would find in a month of Sundays. Maybe the money doesn't stick to his fingers quite so well as it does to those of his American colleagues. Maybe he won't ever make a fortune for himself and retire to a quiet life of comfort on the Riviera, as his friends (and rivals) persistently urge him. He is not a financial opportunist, has not the knack

A SKETCH OF ALEXANDER KORDA

of collaring the major profits. But he is an inveterate showman and a brilliant gambler; everything he does makes money for the industry, either in hard cash or in the kudos that fills a nation's coffers most richly and securely in the end.

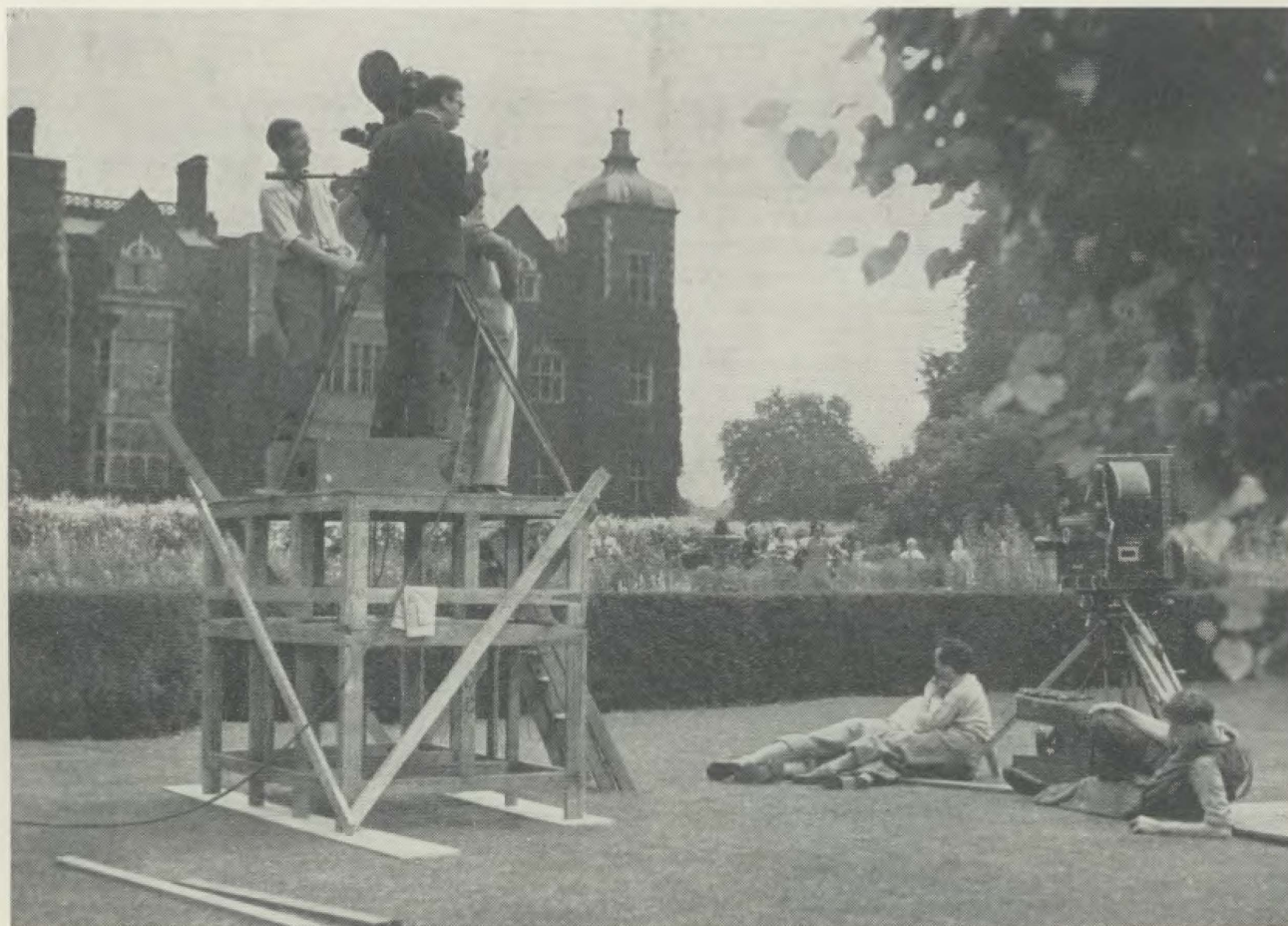
Korda's strength—and his weakness—is that he plays a lone hand. His studios are staffed with experts—the best technicians, players and directors in Europe and America may at any time be found working for him—but the final authority is unshared and undeputed. Korda himself is chief scenarist, director and cutter, as well as producer; he scrutinizes every yard of lace that goes to make the costumes, every line of each preliminary treatment of the story, every extra in the line-up for a crowd scene. There are, at this moment, eleven pictures on the London Films' schedule for the coming year, every one of them a major production. Each of the eleven, whether it be *Gloriana* or *Liszt*, *The Shape of Things to Come* or *The Conquest of the Air*, *Sir Tristram goes West* or *I Claudius*, has its own production unit, concerned with research and practical work on the picture, but Korda himself has at his fingertips every detail of them all.

It is a vast risk and a heavy responsibility for any one man to carry, but it has its compensations. Korda's name on a picture has come to be a hall-

mark of quality, recognised in every country where films are shown. When the exhibitor in Prague or Puerto Rico, Crewe or Copenhagen, hires a Korda picture, he knows he is getting something hand-picked and individual. When a star or a technician gets an offer to work with Korda he knows that he will have the chance to acquit himself fairly and may very well emerge from the engagement with honour.

"I like to make pictures that mean something, not just photographs," Korda once told me. "I am not interested in the programme picture. I don't believe in it. The programme picture is the bad picture, made to feed the machine, as you would feed an engine with coal. The present idea is that the film-making machine must keep on endlessly turning in order to fill the theatres. But that is a false idea. Two hundred and fifty films in a year are quite enough for the whole world, and if I can make a dozen I shall be more than satisfied."

"Yes," said Eddie Cantor, to whom I told the story, and who said some very sapient as well as some incredibly foolish things during his brief stay in England, "and the English film trade should thank heaven for Korda. He is the only producer in the world who has persuaded Hollywood that all we've got to bother about is the other two hundred and thirty-eight."



Korda directing *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY VIII*, a London Films Production

AMATEUR FILM MAKER

By Peter Le Neve Foster, A.R.P.S.

THE Editorial Board of SIGHT AND SOUND have suggested that amateur film makers might be able to make some contribution to the development of films in general. I quite agree, but the question is "How?" In order to answer this question intelligently, some knowledge of how amateur films have grown up and what amateur films people like will perhaps be helpful.

Growth of Amateur Film Making

Amateur film making is not, as is generally supposed, a hobby of very recent growth. Actually the first amateur sub-standard apparatus was marketed in 1901 and took a film 17.5mm. wide with central perforations. Much apparatus was put on the market both in England, Europe and America in the ensuing 25 years and various film widths were tried, including 17.5mm. with both central and side perforations, 28mm., 11mm., 16mm., 9mm. and also films of standard width which economised in film stock by splitting the frame and exposing it in sections by giving it a lateral as well as a vertical shift in the camera. As well as the sub-standard sizes, many cameras taking 35mm. film were marketed in a form intended to appeal to amateur photographers. In

Mr. Le Neve Foster, who is Secretary of the Manchester Film Society and Secretary of the Kinematograph Group of the Royal Photographic Society, has been actively engaged in amateur film making for thirteen years.

spite of all these experiments, however, it was not until 1924 that any measure of success attended efforts to make the general public take up filming as a hobby. The success which has been attained between 1924 and the present time may be judged from the fact that while in 1923 there was only one amateur film club and probably not more than, say, a couple of dozen amateur film makers, to-day there are estimated to be 400,000 amateur cinematographers and 200 amateur film clubs.

Lest these figures may mislead, I would like to qualify them in several directions. By no means all the serious and competent amateurs belong to clubs, and by no means all the clubs are concerned with anything other than making short (and usually extremely bad) dramatic films for the amusement of their members. The total keen, enthusiastic and effective club membership is probably less than one per cent. of all the camera and projector owners. The amateur film clubs, as a class, get publicity out of all proportion to their real importance, though, of course, here and there, there are serious well established clubs which really do deserve all the bouquets that get handed to them.

A great many amateur movie-makers use their cameras only a few times a year—to record the family holiday, for instance—and are analogous to the ordinary "snapshotter" who has a cheap box camera which is only trotted out on state occasions such as birthdays, weddings and the annual week by the seaside. A great many more purchase a camera not from any real interest in films, but simply in order to use it to make records of some particular thing or person—very often the growth of the young hopeful.

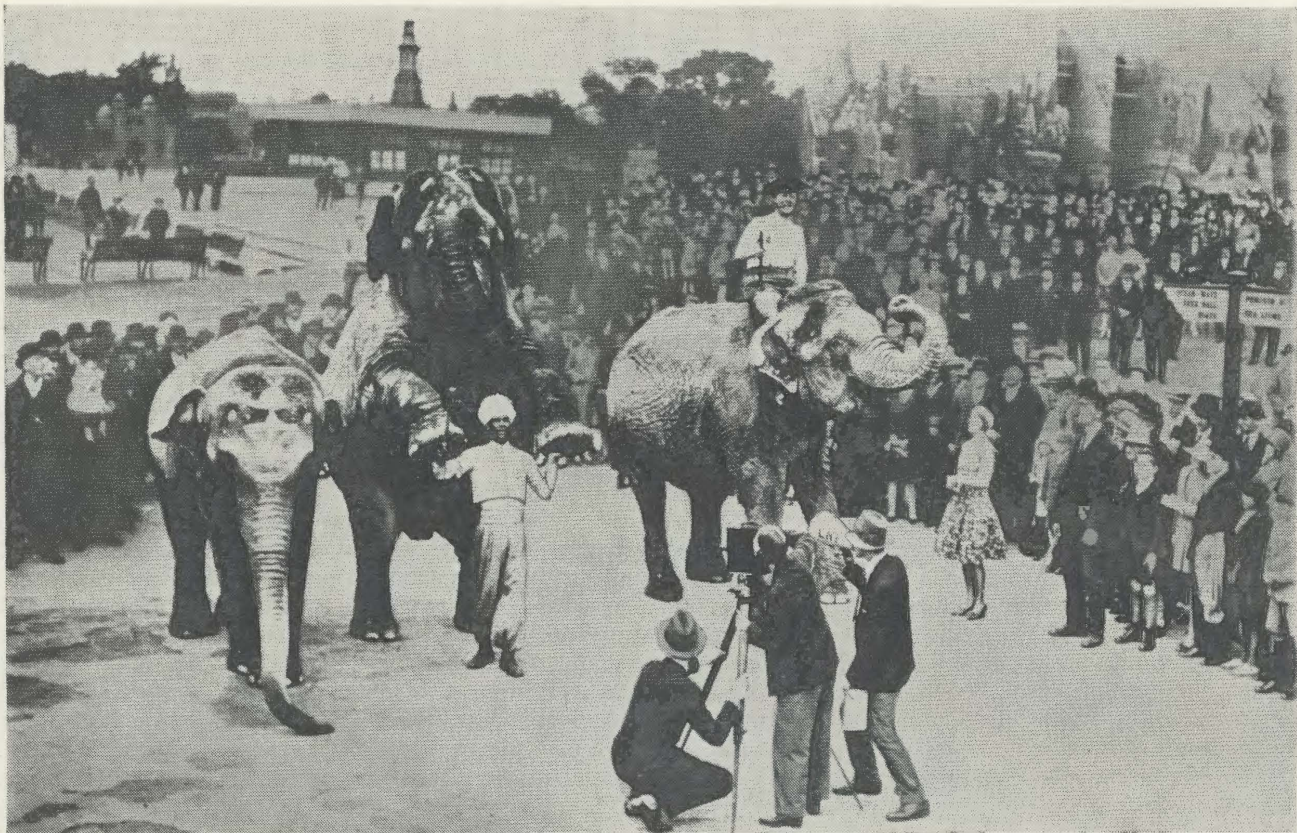
It will be readily appreciated from the foregoing that a large proportion of the amateur film movement can be discounted so far as expecting any *consciously* active assistance in the cause of "better films" is concerned. It is, however, possible (in fact probable) that the mere ownership of a movie camera, however small and cheap it may be, will give visits to the local cinema a greater interest and that therefore the growth of amateur filming will tend, quite unconsciously, to assist the growth of an intelligently critical film-going public.

Enthusiasm Running to Waste

There remains the more enthusiastic section of the amateurs, those energetic people who take the trouble to title their films, who perhaps attend club meetings, enter their films for competitions and read serious technical



Cheam Fields Cine Club "shooting" a scene



Manchester Film Society at work at Bellevue Gardens, the Manchester Zoo

books—in short, who regard their hobby as something rather more than mere animated “snapshotting.” Among these people there is undoubtedly a considerable number of really competent directors, cameramen and technicians.

I doubt if anyone can estimate, with any degree of accuracy, just how many of these people there are, but if they amount only to 5 per cent. of all the amateur film people in the country, it means that there is a lot of enthusiasm running to waste and a lot of valuable photographic apparatus lying idle for a very long time every year. The extent to which this potential film producing and film exhibiting ‘unit’ can be tapped, and the use which could be made of it when it is tapped is a matter to which I understand the Amateur Panel of the Film Institute is giving some attention, though they are by no means the first people who have discussed the question.

Amateurs and Development of Film

Some years ago a good deal of ink was spilt in developing a theory that the amateur film movement could act as a sort of test tube for trying out “new theories of film production” (whatever that may mean)—but I have not yet heard that any professional producer has gone to a bunch of amateurs in order to get some epoch-making idea tried out cheaply.

Another idea which has been put forward is that the amateur film clubs would form a good recruiting

ground for potential stars and ace cameramen. There is probably more in this idea than in the previous one, but still, I do not think it probable that there will be any *very* great influx into the studios from the ranks of amateur movie club memberships.

Far more promising is the suggestion made by the Amateur Panel that something might be done towards getting competent amateurs to co-operate in the production of scientific or other films requiring protracted camerawork. I don’t think that there would be any difficulty in finding enough competent amateurs to do this, but whether it is possible to find enough competent men who are also both willing and *able* to devote the time to the job, is quite another question.

You must remember that amateur movie-makers are interested in films as a hobby and not as a business, and while you may get a good deal of enthusiasm worked up in almost any amateur *for a short time*, it is quite a different matter to find someone who is willing to give up week-end after week-end, or evening after evening, to making a film which, after all, is primarily of interest to you and not to him.

It is the same with projecting films; there are hundreds—possibly thousands—of amateurs who would be willing (and who are competent) to project a film for, say, a scientific body once in a way, but they would definitely not be willing to do the same thing for several nights in succession.

Where the Amateur Can Help

To make any extensive use of the amateur film movement it looks as though ideas would have to be confined to such things as can be handled either by a single super enthusiast (who has got lots of spare time as well as lots of enthusiasm) or else to things which need a short but intense wave of enthusiasm from a few not quite such super enthusiasts. That is why I am doubtful about this "protracted camerawork" suggestion. However, that is by the way, because there are plenty of subjects which come within the range of practical politics, subjects of a documentary nature which are too limited in their appeal to attract the commercial producer, but which can be perfectly well handled by amateurs.

For instance, last summer a certain organisation wanted an event filmed—I believe for the benefit of the local education authority—and a professional news-reel company quoted £150 for the job. This was far more than the people concerned could or would pay. Three amateurs came to the rescue and made the film for £14; had they not done so the picture would never have been made at all. This is a very good example of a case where an amateur was able to do a job which was really too limited in its appeal to justify employing a professional, and there must be thousands of such jobs which never get done at all at present.

A slightly different aspect of the same sort of thing is where an amateur, simply because he *is* an amateur, is in a position to take up an entirely different point of view from the professional. Last July the new Manchester Central Library was opened by H.M. The King, and, of course, the event was covered by the professional news reel companies. It was also covered by the Manchester Film Society. The news reels were short and snappy, and took up a distant and detached attitude, as obviously they had to do in view of the fact that they all have national circulations.

The Manchester Film Society, on the other hand, was in a position to look at things from the point of view of an ordinary Manchester citizen, and produced a leisurely, detailed account of the event running to 450 ft. (16mm.). Technically all the films were good, but it does not require much imagination or knowledge of film journalism to see that the M.F.S. version of the affair would be practically useless to a news reel editor and that the news reels would not be a patch on the M.F.S. film as a *local* record.

I am not decrying news reels or cracking up amateurs. My point is that they can run along parallel lines and that one can do things which the other cannot.

I do not suggest that this sort of thing is the *only* way in which amateurs can take a real place in the development of the film, but I do think that by making films whose appeal is too localized or too specialized to attract commercial producers, amateurs are far more likely to make themselves of immediate practical assistance than they are by trying to become test tubes for film theories, or by imagining themselves to be founders of a new school of film art. I

would like to see every Film Institute Branch with an amateur production (and projection) unit attached to it, ready to film local happenings (among other things) and possibly even little scenarios based on local legends and customs; but, please, please, don't forget that we amateurs are making films as a hobby and that the amount of spare time we can give to this sort of thing is very limited.

TO THE EDITOR

Hampstead,
27th March, 1935.

Dear Sir,

I have listened with care to the comments made upon films seen by many regular and diverse patrons of the cinema, and also by those who are unattracted or even repelled by the exhibitions with which they have either direct or indirect acquaintance.

As a result it has often seemed to me that those in control of the cinema industry are peculiarly indifferent to a possibility of some financial promise. That possibility is the provision in strategic positions in urban districts of cinemas the programmes of which would definitely be made up of films of specifically artistic and, in a broad sense, educational interest and value. Sensuous love and conduct, which departs outrageously from good sense and good taste in any direction, are not subjects of entralling interest to large sections of the community. We are not, that is to say, as depraved as the providers of film entertainment so often seem to assume. I suppose the producers move in a peculiarly artificial realm and judge of the rest of us by the experiences they have within this artificial realm.

The establishment of such cinemas as I am suggesting, conveniently accessible to the kind of public I have in mind, would, I believe, not lack support. They would exercise an influence for good at a stage later than the school age and provide opportunities for the satisfaction of the desire for better class film-entertainment, to which the schools ought to attempt to give birth. Statistics of attendance at cinemas indicate that the cinema public in this country has reached stability under the conditions obtaining. It seems to me highly probable that the provision of cinemas, offering a better type of programme as a regular feature, would attract those who have not so far come definitely and regularly within the influence of this important and attractive form of entertainment. Here courage and vision are indispensable to success.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) A. W. PEGRUM

DETECTIVE FILMS

By H. Douglas Thomson
Author of "Masters of Mystery"

TO judge from the present run of feature films, the cinema is becoming a pronounced plagiarist, either finding copy in the public libraries and re-decorating the evergreen classic, or conscientiously retailing ready-made stage successes. Thus by taking the line of least resistance, producers can snap their fingers at the bogey of the Box Office. These adaptations may or may not be "good cinema"—to borrow from Miss Lejeune's Thesaurus; but it should not be hard to demonstrate that the film created solely for the cinema has greater pretensions to art than the adaptation for the films of a literary story. But this I must leave to the higher criticism to determine.

What I am concerned with is the question of how far the cinema has been successful in adapting the most popular form of contemporary novel—the detective story.

The detective story has a catholic appeal. It delights not only the devotees of Blood and Thunder, but also the intelligentsia of Oxford or Bloomsbury. It is the one fashionable recreation shared by celebrities in every walk of life.

What is a Detective Story?

But before we proceed any further, we had better make up our minds what we mean by a detective story. The best authorities—like Dorothy Sayers or Father Ronald Knox—regard the highest form of a detective story as a *problem*, the plot consisting of a logical and analytical deduction of the solution from evidence given at once or in the course of the narra-

tive. And if you would like examples, we give you *The Cask*, or *Trent's Last Case*, or *The Canary Murder Case*, or *Have His Carcase*, or any of Dr. Thorndyke's cases. In this field it is a recognised canon that the author should play fair with his readers and not withhold vital evidence which would prevent the latter from arriving at the correct solution. Frequently the solution hinges on chemical experiments, finger prints, cyphers, even mathematical permutations and railway timetables—subjects that hardly have an adequate pictorial appeal.

There is, of course, the human interest—the interplay of passions and abnormal emotions rather than of character, for characterization is only given, as it were, in cross section. And in recognition of "the most unlikely person" theme, which induces us to suspect the least suspicious character, few if any of the *dramatis personae* are painted in their true colours. Generally speaking, the only characters that get a square deal are the detective and his Dr. Watson.

Atmosphere of Crime

Lastly we come to the setting. G. K. Chesterton once described the atmosphere of the crime story as "the poetry of modern life." He was thinking, no doubt, of the secrets and the mystery of a city at night, darkened alleys and lonely mansions; the machinations of demented scientists, the plottings of the Napoleons of crime, the harbouring of chimpanzees in suburban garages and so forth. Suspicion, suspense, adventure; hairbreadth escapes, pursuits,



Effects of light and shadow in a scene from DEATH AT BROADCASTING HOUSE, directed by Reginald Denham (ABFD)

a holocaust of corpses—all these serve to entertain our tired business men and imaginative office-boys.

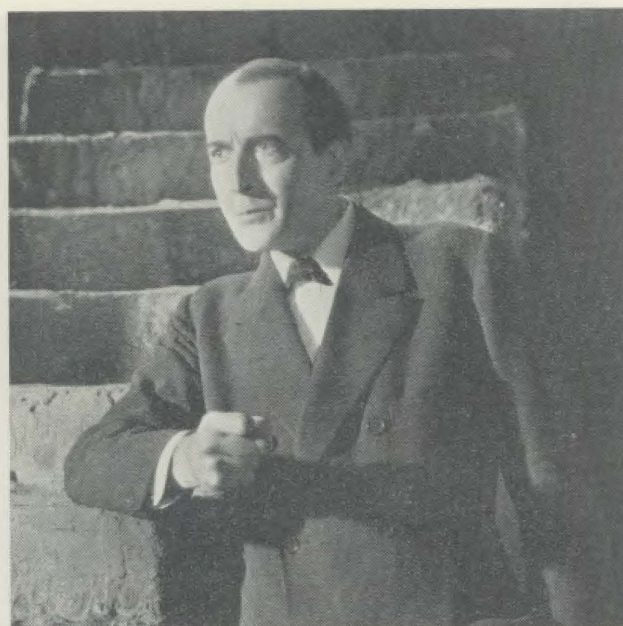
These, then, are the three ingredients—problem, human interest and sensation. In the pure detective story, that is the order of their importance. In the thriller the order is reversed. We glory in pugilistic feats and epic combats; we love civilisation to be jeopardised and the Bank of England to be blown up. We have to become Philistines to join forces with Nayland Smith against Dr. Fu Manchu, or with Bulldog Drummond against Carl Petersen. Midway between the problem detective story and the thriller comes the attractive hybrid with a weaker solution of problem, human interest and sensation in equal parts. As often as not the setting is a house party.

Filming Problem Detective Stories

It is, as we have already hinted, a waste of time to screen a problem detective story as such. One cannot project a process of reasoning—and even if one could, its entertainment value would be non-existent. All that we could see would be the detective prowling about—for you may rest assured that he would not be allowed to sit still to do his thinking. Only in *Crime Without Passion* has there been an attempt to picture processes of thought in what might be called a “non-static sequence.” But even here picturisation was only possible since it was the imagination of the lawyer that was at work rather than any logical analysis of data, and since selection of incident was not restricted by any rigid evidence. The presentation photographically of a mass of detailed evidence cannot be made a thrilling experience. The discovery of a blonde hair on the hearthrug, or the ash of a Trabuco cigar may be a grand moment in a novel, but on the screen it does not mean a thing. I think I am right in saying that in the production of problem detective films, the problem *per se* has invariably been kept in the background. This is certainly true of the film versions of the Van Dine murder cases. Neither William Powell nor Warren William has ever suggested that Philo Vance was solving an intricate psychological enigma. Again in the numerous Sherlock Holmes films a straight narrative leaves no time for soliloquising. In the same way A. E. W. Mason's *At the Villa Rose* became a pure adventure story when translated to the screen. But there is one crumb of consolation that the problem-fan may have. In seeing a detective film the audience is deluded into believing by some sort of “pathetic fallacy” that both they and the detective are thinking furiously—which is, after all, less exacting entertainment.

Screen “Thrillers”

Where the film does have a chance is in the creation of atmosphere and in its sensational effects. Consider for a moment the producer's stock-in-trade. He bathes his sets in shadows; he throws the tiny light of an electric torch into a darkened library; he leads us up and down staircases at nightmare inclines. He takes us for a ride that beggars all description. His sound track is penetrated with dull thuds,



Arthur Wontner in the TRIUMPH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (G.B.D.)

hysterical screams, and the staccato of machine guns. In short he can give us the perfect thriller. *The Man Who Knew Too Much* and *Scarface* are infinitely better films than adaptations which presume to retain a problem. Many readers will remember that grand episodic saga of *The Exploits of Elaine*, and maybe sigh for the return of the good old days. Entirely different in its appeal, though unrivalled for its sensationalism, was the German film *M*, and its precursors *Dr. Mabuse* and *Warning Shadows*. It is to be regretted that the epics of Dr. Fu Manchu and Bulldog Drummond eschewed honest-to-goodness sensationalism. In the thriller sophistication is entirely out of place.

Hybrid Detective Stories

The hybrid detective story, which may be built up of such orthodox features as “murder, inquest and suspicion falling on everyone in turn,” or into which may be introduced the artificial light comedy of manners, or even satire, requires the deftest of handling on the screen. Very few films of this type have left any impression on my memory with the exception of Dashiell Hammett's *The Thin Man*.

It must be a source of acute dissatisfaction to many that the greatest detective of all—Sherlock Holmes—has received such poor treatment in the film versions of his immortal exploits. It is true the rôle is almost as popular as Hamlet was to the star actor some years ago, and it has been essayed—indifferently one must admit—by such accomplished actors as John Barrymore, Clive Brook and Raymond Massey. But the Holmes tradition has been travestied and held up to ridicule, “Elementary, my dear Watson” being dragged into the script *ad nauseam* like a theme song. But now Arthur Wontner in *The Triumph of Sherlock Holmes* has given us the authentic character. For this relief, much thanks.



"The Plaza Cinema, Sutton, is among the comparatively few which bear the impress of an intelligent interpretation of elegant simplicity."

Reproduced by courtesy of "Architecture Illustrated."

THE cinema expresses a phase of modern life which is of comparatively recent inception. The early years of the present century witnessed the introduction of a form of entertainment which has developed with an amazing rapidity completely unforeseen by the venturesome few who first exploited it for private gain.

The cinema is, indeed, one of the many notable phenomena of modern life, and it is reasonable to expect that some definite architectural expression might have been developed concurrently with progress in the technique of film production and exhibition. Such, unfortunately, has not been the case.

The impress of individuality in design has persisted and still persists to frustrate the semblance of broad similarity which buildings of definite categories should reasonably possess. There are cinemas designed in the styles of Tudor, Roman, Greek, Italian Renaissance, Egyptian, Chinese and Gothic architecture sturdily independent of environment, of suitability of purpose and of common reasonableness; they submit to no aesthetic control beyond the passing whim of the owner and his architect. Inevitably, under such circumstances, there have followed a succession of fashions in

CINEMA FAÇADE

THE TASK OF THE MODERN CINEMA ARCHITECT

By

J. R. Leathart, F.R.I.B.A.

design, particularly in interior decoration, which, in their ebb and flow, have left a vast amount of stranded junk to litter the streets of our big towns.

The early post-war architecture of the cinema reflected the martial spirit in decoration—shields, trophies of war, spears and a general profusion of weapons tied together with ribbons and entwined with laurel leaves neatly done in stone and plaster were hung on walls and ceilings with impressive abandon; the general background for this sinister display was borrowed from the architecture of Greece and Rome. There followed a period of nondescript quiescence during which a variety of odd styles of decoration were tried out to the admiration and astonishment of an uninitiated public. The Chinese Pagoda theatre in Los Angeles is the world's most notable example of an attempt to fuse Eastern architecture with Western ideals in the film entertainment business. The result is as paralysing to behold as the attempt to drape a semblance of an Egyptian temple on to a London suburban cinema front, or the reproduction of a near-Gothic cathedral interior in the Tooting Granada cinema.

Some few years ago an observant but irresponsible traveller returned from the Continent with the tale of a new simplicity in cinema design which he fatuously labelled "modern" and which has since provided some of our cinema architects with yet another opportunity of second-hand self-expression. It would be impolite, and not a little dangerous, to name a few of the many recent cinemas upon which their architects have bestowed all that is better forgotten about the "modern" style. Among the comparatively few which bear the impress of an intelligent interpretation of elegant simplicity is the

Plaza Cinema, Sutton. This front retains a becoming dignity and yet at the same time it has an air of vivacity which betokens a building devoted to the purpose of entertainment. The combination of restraint and liveliness is most happily adjusted in this design which is of a particularly high standard of achievement for an English cinema.

The modern cinema front must fulfil two major purposes; it must be intrinsically shapely and free from applied enrichment, and it must function as a background for the publicity essential to an entertainment building. Moreover, the publicity must have a dual purpose; it must be legible both by day and by night. It has been said that a cinema front need be nothing more than a gigantic billposting station. This is a drastic statement that requires some qualification; although, fundamentally, it may be perfectly true, there is no doubt that the architectural expression of the cinema will be unduly limited if this tenet is generally accepted. There are some cinema owners who have embraced the dictum as a creed, and one dismal result can be seen in Leicester Square where the Empire Cinema front has completely gone to ground behind an impenetrable curtain of flashing sign and Neon tube advertising.

The new "Dreamland" amusement centre at Margate represents an attempt to reconcile the necessity for large areas of advertising display on the main façade facing the sea with the preservation of some architectural character and dignity. The design may be termed a background for predetermined publicity. The problem inherent in advertising on entertainment buildings is concerned with the interchangeability of the display and visibility both by day and night. Neon tubes and intermittent electric lamp signs are of little value in daylight unless mounted on coloured metal backgrounds shaped in the form of the general lettering and whatever other decorative device the erotic fancy of the commercial sign-maker's designer may decide upon. On the "Dreamland" building, except where specially arranged Neon tubing outlines the main contour of the architectural design, all illuminated publicity is mounted on coloured backgrounds which are legible by day. In addition to this provision, the static publicity is designed to fit light reflecting recesses; at nightfall the illumination within these recesses silhouettes the letters, whilst by day they are distinctive by reason of the normal shadows cast in the recesses, forming a dark background against which their light-toned surfaces contrast.

It is interesting to record the fact that the architects of this building were entirely responsible for the arrangement and design of the publicity.

This procedure differs from that usually adopted in cinema-front publicity when the architect's responsibility for the ultimate effect of his design is curtailed by the employment of commercial designers who indulge themselves in a veritable orgy of after-treatment by means of illuminated tubes and popping lamps. Not only is all semblance of the original design entirely lost thereby, but the resulting confusion is clearly indicative of a ruthless disregard of civic amenities and the feeling of all

those who are above the mentality of gaping nit-wits.

The standard of the average film entertainment is not yet quite so low as to require illuminated pandemonium on the outside of the cinema to attract an audience!

It may be said with regard to the future development of cinema architecture that there is no possibility of a survival of the "period" front. Columns, cornices and the rest of the traditional features of classic architecture, however skilfully they may be designed and applied as a piece of façade scene painting, are illogical and entirely unsuitable to the modern publicity needs of the architecture of pleasure. The architect who persists in thinking in terms of a style of architecture which expresses the thoughts of by-gone ages is definitely incapable of producing an intelligent cinema building.

Simplicity of form, an absence of applied enrichment, arresting compositional grouping, advertising areas considered as an integral part of the structure, and duality of effect both by day and night are the principal considerations governing the modern cinema architect's task. The manner in which he succeeds in combining these essentials is the measure by which his work should be judged.



Margate 'Dreamland' "represents an attempt to reconcile the necessity for large areas of advertising display with the preservation of some architectural character and dignity"

Reproduced by courtesy of "Building"

TEACHING CHILDREN "ROAD SENSE"

THE FILM AS AN AID TO SAFETY TEACHING

By Dr. J. Watson Grice, D.Sc., J.P.
Chairman, National Schools Propaganda Committee,
National "Safety First" Association

"SAFETY FIRST" teaching is now recognised as a national need.

The N.S.F.A. has for some years used in its propaganda visual aids in the form of pictorial illustrations, lantern slides and films. So far as the children are concerned this work has been carried out by its Schools Propaganda Committee, which is representative of the teachers of all kinds and grades of schools throughout Great Britain, of the administrative staffs and of the Board of Education. It has also the advice and help of several of our leading Chief Constables and of members of local authorities.

The purpose of this article is to review this development.

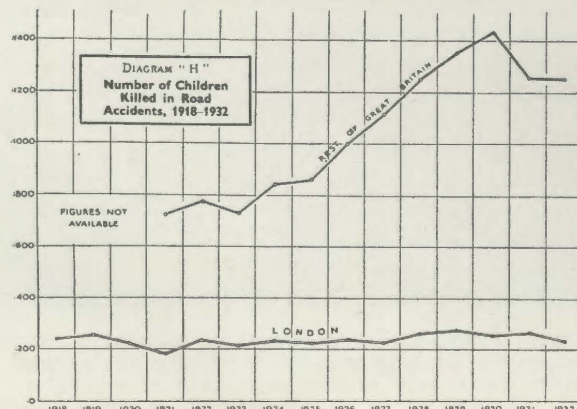
The Needs of the Situation

During the last five years over 1,000 boys and nearly 500 girls under 14 years of age were killed each year in Great Britain. In addition to the children there were annually between 5,000 and 6,000 older victims of road accidents.

Recent expert analysis of the reports of accidents made by the Research Department of the N.S.F.A. has given us a considerable body of information relating to the frequency and causes of accidents, both to boys and girls, which has already been found exceedingly useful in the National Road Safety Campaign and should serve as a guide in school education.

The Success of Safety Teaching

Ample proof that safety teaching is valuable and worth while is afforded by the accompanying diagram.



Safety teaching has been going on in London schools throughout the period (1918-32); whilst in the provinces it has gradually increased and has been generally adopted since 1929, with favourable results, as the diagram shows.

The Association has always received the greatest help from the co-operation of teachers and Education Authorities. The figures pay high tribute to what the teachers have already done voluntarily towards the reduction of road accidents and should be a strong incentive to further efforts.

The Film as an Aid

We have always had the highest regard for the value of visual aids in the "Safety First" campaign. Posters, lantern slides and films have all been used with good effect. Unfortunately, the latter are very expensive to produce, particularly sound films, which are now demanded to hold the attention of the children. Over the course of the past few years the N.S.F.A. have issued several films all of which have been widely displayed. It is only comparatively recently, however, that we have been able to have a specially prepared sound film for children. This was made possible through the generosity of the Association's Vice-Patron, Mr. Gordon Stewart, who has done so much to assist us in our work. The title of this film is *Alert To-day—Alive To-morrow*. Its length is just over



A Great Dane illustrating how grown-ups should help the little ones to cross a busy street. From *ALERT TO-DAY—ALIVE TO-MORROW*

4,000 feet and it takes just under three-quarters of an hour to show. It is certainly the finest film which the Association has yet been able to boast, and has been found to be very highly received by the children, nearly a million of whom have seen it at specially staged cinema performances which we organise under the title of "Children's Hours." Tribute must be paid to all those cinema proprietors and managers who have placed their theatres at the disposal of the Association or its local branches, without expense and by whose courtesy and help it has been possible for the film to be shown.

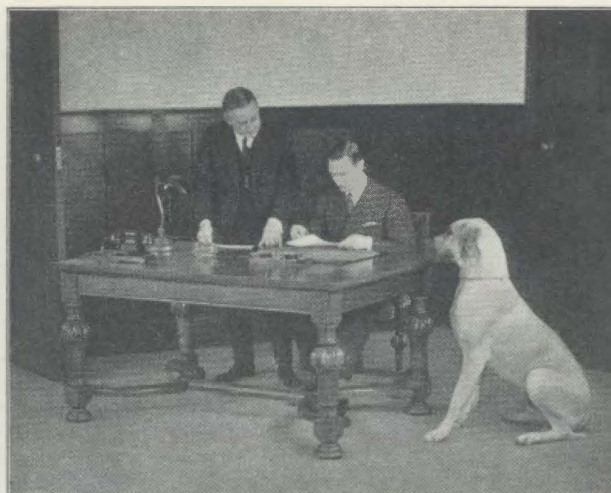
We are convinced that films—and particularly modern talking films, which have a definite appeal to children—are one of the best aids in safety education. Unfortunately, the N.S.F.A. has not at present the means for putting in hand other films of this nature. It can only be hoped that in due course the country will realise, even more vividly than it does at present, the tremendous loss of life and limb which takes place annually on the roads, and that money will be available for a big educational campaign to try and prevent this holocaust of the road.

In *Alert To-day—Alive To-morrow* the interest of the children is held throughout the film by the introduction of a number of specially trained great danes who take part. They show that even dogs can be made to understand the meaning of "Safety First."

Advantages of Films for Instructional Purposes

The value of the film for educational purposes may be summarised as follows:—

- (a) It is in essence a moving picture and the actual scenes outside the schools can be brought into the classroom;
- (b) It is the only means of cultivating a notion of speed which results in dangers;



H.R.H. The Duke of York with Mr. Gordon Stewart and his Great Dane, which "stars" in the film *ALERT TO-DAY—ALIVE TO-MORROW*

- (c) It gives an opportunity for the children by assisted imagination to fancy they are really in the street;
- (d) It gives life and actuality to safety games, exercises, devices and diagrams, etc.

Mass Presentation and Classroom Films

The N.S.F.A. sound film *Alert To-day—Alive To-morrow* is, of course, a mass presentation film suitable for showing either in an appropriate school hall or outside hall or cinema. More important, perhaps, is the development of the classroom film in which emphasis may be put on the educational side rather than the entertainment side.

There are, of course, various types and sizes of films and much depends on the individual circumstances as to which can be used with best advantage. Classroom films with the simpler 9.5 or 16mm. apparatus enable each teacher to use them to fortify his talks and lessons. It also affords opportunity

(Continued on page 30)

A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

"During the twelve months ending on March 9th last 7,353 people were killed and 23,067 injured on the roads. These are figures which will emphasise the gravity of the question of road mortality, and serve to remind us that this is a problem which affects the whole community and which must receive attention by every organization or movement in the country which is equipped to assist in any degree. I learn, therefore, with the greatest interest that you have decided to include an article on the subject in the Magazine of the British Film Institute. Education in this vital matter must begin in the schools, and I am convinced that in this the film can play a really vivid part. The film more than any other aid can bring children as near as may be to the experience of actual conditions; they can learn more quickly the elementary rules of road safety; they can appreciate more imaginatively the danger which may arise in disregarding them. In short, the film can be made a means of providing expert instruction in "road sense" which can be widely disseminated in schools and public cinemas alike. Teachers all over the country have for a very long time now been doing a great deal to help forward the Road safety campaign; their task can be made easier with the film, and the British Film Institute by encouraging their interest in its possibilities as an additional means of teaching safety on the roads, can give inspiring assistance in this great social problem which arises out of modern life and conditions."

LESLIE HORE-BELISHA



The Beer Hall scene from MASKERADE, directed by Willy Forst

(Reunion)

FILMS OF THE QUARTER

By Alistair Cooke

THE growing confidence and volume of British publicity agents is something that Wardour Street may look upon with pleasure. But it is more and more going to deprive you and me of the harmless, and hitherto dependable, adventure of being free to choose the films we'd like to see. One of the accidental merits of British films used to be that they were indifferently advertised and that going off to see one was a rather gallant risk—whether it was bad or good, you had only yourself to blame or congratulate. Now we find ourselves fighting through excited mobs, alert policemen, scathing arc lights, rows of boiled shirts . . . and for what? For, usually, just an ordinarily banal opus, a good deal fussier than any odd feature picture you can see for a shilling in your oldest clothes. And the resentment at having been driven in state to a dull picture encourages a critic to dislike it more than he should and conversely to pretend to derive enormous pleasure from a film that is showing round the corner next Thursday. You may say that all this publicity can do no harm to intelligent people. But it has rather the effect of an authoritative editorial—which, whether brilliantly or badly written,

persuades you it is, at any rate, talking about the issues.

And I was instinctively about to start this chronicle with a damaging review of *The Dictator*, thus proclaiming the dangerous implication that however bad it may be, it is an important film to write about. The stark fact is, of course, that almost any other film of the quarter can claim a little more distinction. That *The Dictator* (I'm sorry that an actual film had to exemplify this sort of preconception) is just another messy, pretentious historical film doesn't much matter; that it is becoming daily more difficult to judge such films on their merit does.

By the same spite I am incited to pick out *A Perfect Week-end*, the new Cagney film, and *The Path of Glory*, a short satire written by L. du Garde Peach, as the really excellent offerings of the quarter. But again I am merely reacting to a general assumption that such modestly presented films are pretty certain to be mediocre.

Having once shaken off this imposed neurosis, I should say that *Ruggles of Red Gap* is excellent, though a million people have said so; and that *Strictly Confidential* is as good as a Capra film

need be to put it far ahead of any other current British, Continental or American essay in folk comedy. The story of the first is an American classic, written and received a quarter of a century ago as a hilarious satire. English audiences will probably think of it as by some fluke a farcical but true estimate of an undying milieu. It has every trite ingredient of its type; one seems to have been seeing bits of *Ruggles* in all sorts of films for many years now. But somehow Leo McCarey's affection for the story and his astonishing, swinging tempo create a magnificence which one constantly forgets is no more than that of a magnificent platitude. You don't have time to stop and think what a homely tune it is. It's like hearing "Keep the Home Fires Burning" sung by a thousand voices and accompanied by the Philadelphia orchestra. You forget about the books you read and try not to be ashamed of the gluck in your throat. Again Mr. McCarey's fidelity to a direct lush view of a period rescue his work from the ordinariness of his material, where Mr. Lubitsch's oblique smart-aleckry would have stressed it. Frank Capra has the same honesty of treatment. But his gusto derives not from any warmth of spirit he communicates to his actors, but from a shrewd observation of character and an inconsequent affection for their sentimentalities. Capra's are not triumphs of team-spirit but of a personal gift of observation. And because he knows and loves his Americans as well as Pabst his Germans and Clair his French, his gift is as rare as any in Hollywood. *Strictly Confidential* calls for much odd detailed acquaintance with American locale and idiom. Much of the dialogue and the interplay of accents create a social comedy as unrecognisable here as Cicely Courtneidge's impersonations, say, would be in America. But nobody need fear to find the film cryptic. It is generous of its detail, and there is to Capra's direction a visual gift of animating ordinary people inside the setting of a news-reel, rather than of turning the spots onto stars, that makes his work characteristic in any land.

Those who like to discover not films but 'trends' may be comforted by Hollywood's current tenderness for

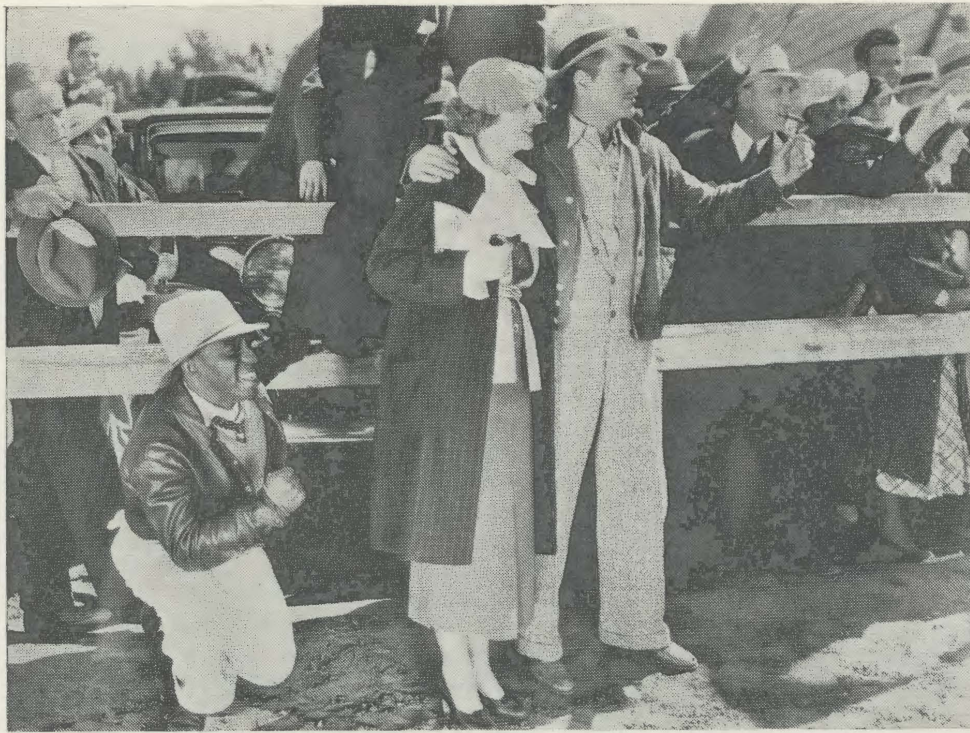
this little realm of kings. *David Copperfield* is as handsome and elaborate and reverential a tribute as any Dickens Society could pray for. It has had bestowed on it all Mr. Cukor's lavishness and propriety of sentiment, all his poverty of imagination, all his uncanny genius for avoiding an approach to film direction, all his fool-proof competence for making the frame of the screen topple over with packed groupings of stage actors. A curious Dickens is implied—a sort of demi-god Rotarian with a strain of Dr. Barnardo. Only in the character of Mr. Dick is there a hint of that mad creative energy of a man too neurotic to stop working. The *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* equates imperial wish-thinking and pictorial excitement well enough to make this film the popular success of London. And any cynic who feels like walking out on it every ten minutes is kept in his seat by the promise of droller cynicisms from the lips of Franchot Tone.

Two English films scrambled into the end of the year and saved our face for 1934. They were *The Man Who Knew Too Much* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. The second has a smooth script by Robert Sherwood and Arthur Wimperis, melodrama eased by the Korda liking for gracious landscapes, Leslie Howard, and a story at exactly the length of its suspense. The first, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, has his familiar mastery of a slow, ominous tempo, passages of breathless tantalising cutting by Hugh Stewart and some psychological detail in the direction that advances Mr. Hitchcock along the path previously trodden by Fritz Lang.

It's a Gift, a new W. C. Fields comedy, at once revived and improved a genre, and incidentally promised an audience not much changed for the long-promised Chaplin film. It is our misfortune that the cinema came about twenty years too late to



Charles Laughton as Ruggles in *RUGGLES OF RED GAP*, by Leo McCarey (Paramount)



Myrna Loy and Warner Baxter in **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**, directed by Frank Capra (Columbia)

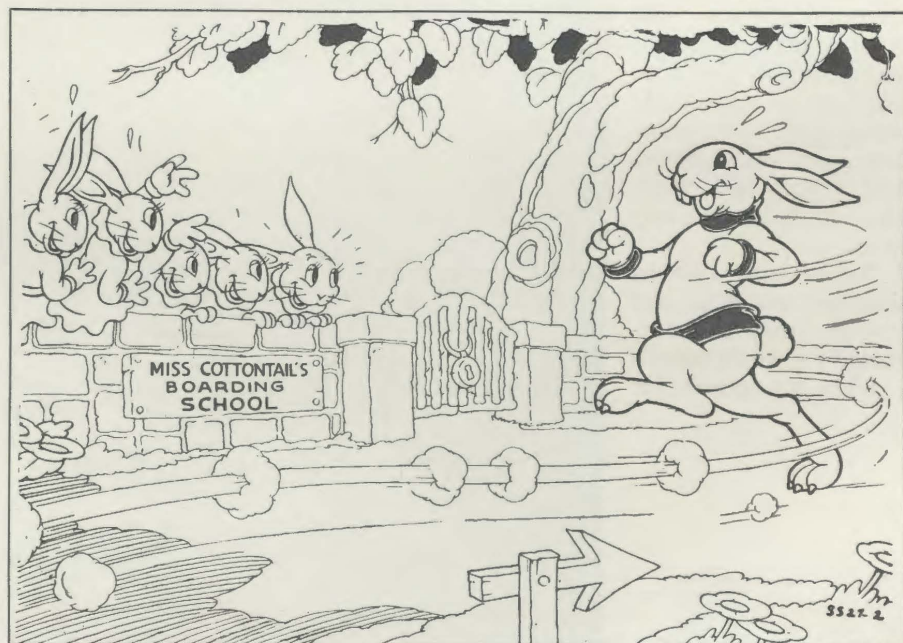
There is a compact and self-conscious audience in London alone that will make a point of seeing any French or Hungarian film before an English or American one. We can only hope that this habit is not to be popularised in the provinces of a nation singularly indiscriminating in its judgment of foreign films. I should like to wish Mr. Creer well on the evidence of

do justice to Fields's extraordinary talent. He is now too tolerant of his own mellowness, his juggling is an amusing relic, he is too old to demand a scrupulous script, too content to decorate over-blown gags that he could richly dispense with. But this film had an exquisite end, enlarged his delayed, fumbling comment into a philosophy, unashamedly symbolised his particular contribution—a sort of bland acceptance of his own hypocrisy.

We are likely to have easier access to foreign films since the formation of a new distributing company, Reunion Films. But there is yet no reason to suppose that the choice of films will be more telling. Mr. Creer has a frightening responsibility in selecting the continental films for provincial distribution and the first lot do not imply that he is aware of that responsibility. Again, by an accident of publicity, we are being compelled to discuss films that good or bad are offered us as characteristics of their countries and their style. Reunion Films will and should become a clearing-house for European films. It should therefore choose the more warily.

his first three releases, *Maskerade*, *Marie—Hungarian Legend* and *Reka*. But only one of these, *Maskerade*, deserves, I think, the popularising it is now to have. And even that, I'm afraid, has succeeded rather by the cultural assurances it offers in the names of its cast, its script-writer, the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra, a stickily interpolated solo by Caruso, and the general patrician air of its anecdote, rather than by any cinematic proofs of those assurances.

There remain—or let's say, rather, there emerge from all the competitive pomp of Hollywood and Elstree a couple of achievements this quarter that go to console us for all the intermediate publicity



A scene from Disney's **TORTOISE AND THE HARE** (United Artists)

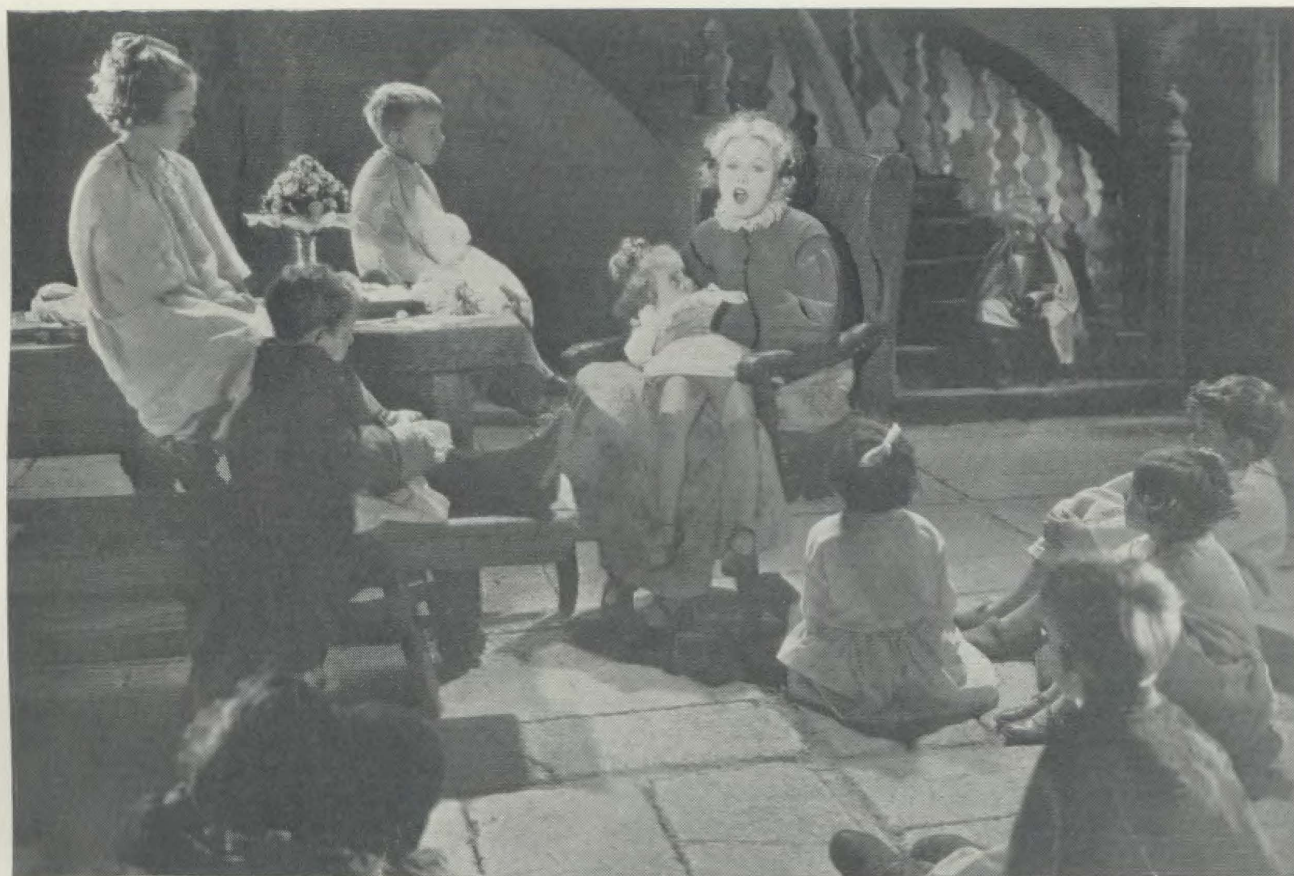
literature, the vulgarity of 'first-nights,' the bullying into indifferent continental work. They are—two new Disneys, and the 'Crazy Week' of the Cameo News Theatre near Leicester Square.

The *Tortoise and the Hare* tops the first stage of Disney's confidence with colour. His linear technique is now as exuberant in colour as it was—about the time of *The Spider and the Fly*—in black and white. It seemed that only in the old skittish manipulation of perspective was he lagging. But now there is the first coloured Mickey, *The Band Concert*, to set that right too. A whirlwind sends the whole Disney world askew for its creator to demonstrate his precise control of unrelated masses, his virtuoso gifts for hurling pigs right out into the audience and thus seeming to keep alive a stereoscopic world that needs no more than two dimensions. And in the first, the hare and the tortoise, while seeming to be funny miracles of naturalism, actually remain so true to the ballet movement which is always the basis of Mr. Disney's sense of character that one begins to wonder if there is anyone in films to-day who possesses (unconsciously or not, doesn't matter) a more ordered wealth of—of tragic feeling, simply.

There was much well-bred excitement on the Rialto about a cartoon by Hector Hoppin and Anthony Gross called *Joie de Vivre*. It was original and provoking in its use of backgrounds (cutting them to give them body and character as no one has thought of doing before), but the dance and pursuit of the

three characters was a thin and muddled conception.

The Cameo Theatre had, at the beginning of March, the grown-up idea that a little re-arrangement of News-reels, some droll re-cutting of documentaries would provide a laugh or two. It extracted all the pictures from a news-reel and left us dizzy with expectancy before sequences of smoothly joined captions. It cut a news-reel into a short drama, relieved the story with an occasional, entirely irrelevant baboon trotting harmlessly along a road. It was, admittedly, at an early, crazy state of satire. But at any rate, somebody in London is beginning to play with the idea of cinema as a medium of satire, however humble. Perhaps it won't be long now before somebody presents the first film revue, beginning with a short exposition of a simple story, following it by pastiches of the same thing told in the styles of—oh, say Pabst, Clair, Metzner, Lubitsch, de Mille and Eisenstein. Parody is not only fun in itself: it has rescued, when deliberately undertaken, many writers and painters from naivety and soft-headed solemnity. Films are easy to classify to-day because they are made by men who know no styles but their own. The practice of parody can help an artist to be circumspect, not about his humour, but about his motives when he undertakes serious work. Its omission from the training, and apparently the disposition, of the avant-garde is what makes the highbrow in films, even more than elsewhere, a person to trust in everything but—humour.



Anny Ondra in KLEIN DORRITT, based on Dickens' "Little Dorrit"

By courtesy of the Forum Cinema



FOR ALL ETERNITY,
directed by Marion
Grierson (Strand Films)

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

FOR ALL ETERNITY (British). Production : Strand Film Company. Direction : Marion Grierson. Music : Walter Vale and Greville Cooke. Chorus : Choir of All Saints, Margaret Street. Length : 1,500 feet.

Only in the last issue of these pages a plea was made for a documentation of the national life—a plea that must have a thousand echoes up and down the land. It's not new ; it's been heard from many a quarter for years past whenever some ineffectual nibble at a man-sized task has appeared before the public. Well, *Rotha's Face of Britain* is on the way ; but for immediate and serious consideration there has arrived Marion Grierson's *For all Eternity*.

The theme of this film—the spirit that rests in the great churches of England and its relationship to the people—is of far deeper significance in the national life than modern opinion will allow, and is affected by no narrowness of sect or denomination. It is a theme which calls for broad understanding, sensitiveness of touch and personal conviction. All these Miss Grierson has brought to the making of her film, and combined them with technical skill of which there can be no question. Here is no inert photographic panorama with dully echoing speech and sound, but a living subject unforgettably presented : visual and sound successfully welded into an instrument of impressive penetration. There is no “background” to this film in the accepted sense. It leaves the feeling that the churches are *of* the people and the people *of* the churches—neither superimposed *upon* the other—a most difficult effect to convey.

Wide vistas of sunlit countryside leading the eye to the upward pointing finger of cathedral spire in the far distance, merge gently into the stately edifice itself. Deep murmuring organ and softly peeling bells point the warm, sleepy air of the precincts. The harmony of the choir and a glorious west window, a head bowed in prayer—the preacher's voice echoing down the lofty nave, and attention is wholly captured, atmosphere complete.

The low key in which the opening is pitched prevails while the great history of the churches' building is unfolded. Saxon, Norman, Mediaeval—inseparably linked with the inspired craftsmanship of the early masons and carvers. Always church and people are shown as one—in work, in worship and in trade, as busy markets grew up beneath cathedral shadow. Words of explanation are skilfully woven into a musical web of organ note and choral chant.

As, from the days of monastic influence, the scene changes through the years to the present, the tempo of the film gradually quickens. The people's life has altered—the industrial monster has them in its grip. But amid all the dust and clangour—over factory, mine and bustling street—the deep swell of the organ persists. The churches have not changed : nor, at heart, has the spirit which they engendered in men. Is not Liverpool being built ? Instinct with the serene dignity and understanding of age, they still stand among the people—a symbol for all eternity. Sweeping up in a great crescendo, the music ceases with a triumphant “Amen.”

The manner in which music, choir and especially organ are utilized to suggest, emphasize and amplify

is most interesting and is obviously the result of careful experiment; while the intermittent commentary is not at any time a disturbing element. Photographically, also, the film is of a high order: many sequences are of great beauty, in particular certain interiors. Miss Grierson is to be congratulated on a fine achievement, deserving of the widest showing. But above all, she has accomplished that most elusive thing—the creation of atmosphere.

J.R.F.T.

DOOD WASSER (Dutch). Production: Nederlandsche Filmgemeenschap. Direction: Gerard Rutten. Scenario: Simon Koster. Photography: Andor von Barsy. Art Direction: Lajos von Ebneth. Music: Walter Gronostay.

Setting human characters against natural backgrounds constitutes a problem with which all makers of documentary films—more especially, perhaps, those of Britain and Russia—are intimately concerned. On this account *Dood Wasser*, which may best be described as part documentary and part story film, is likely to provoke considerable discussion and may, indeed, make some contribution towards a solution. At all events, it indicates certain pitfalls to be avoided.

Dealing with a subject of national importance, the great Zuider Zee land reclamation scheme, the film also sets out to show the difficulties arising therefrom amongst the local population of fisherfolk: the stubborn fight of the older generation, to whom their fishing was life itself, against the attraction of farming the wide new lands. Thus the theme dictates, to a large extent, the action of the story and in so far the film is documentary.

For a variety of reasons the explanatory prologue, though overlong and apt to be somewhat confused, is of major interest. Handled impressionistically, it traces the history of the drainage scheme from the early ideas of the 17th century to the building of the huge dyke and its completion in 1932. Skilful use is made of maps, plans and models to which support is given by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Mengelberg's direction, and a male-voice choir. Gronostay's music is of a remarkable quality and though at times its concert form is inclined to swamp the picture, on the whole it fulfils its purpose; while an innovation is made by having the actual story sung by a soloist, an experiment which may well hold possibilities of further development. The story which follows possesses no special merit as such and is slow in action. Waving grass and busy windmills in the epilogue indicate the triumph of new over old.

Though *Dood Wasser* shows considerable care and skill in the making, Rutten's technique is obviously that of the silent film. His continuous use of close-up and over-elaboration of detail evidence too close study of Russian methods. Nor is he helped by indifferent photography. The film, moreover, would greatly benefit by drastic shortening and is, indeed, a powerful argument for the incisive-

ness and brevity which is essential in the treatment of such sociological problems.

J.R.F.T.

AUSTRIA BEAUTIFUL (Austrian). Production: Selenophone, Vienna, (in association with Klangfilm-Tobis). Direction and Scenario: Dr. Max Zebenthofer. Photography: Hans Tinber, Karl Kuramayer and Rudi Mayer. Length: 1,100 feet.

Inappropriate or misleading titles to films have long been a cause of annoyance. Usually story-films are the offenders, catch-penny salaciousness seeming to be the main object. The purpose of documentary has, to a large extent, spared it that affliction. *Austria Beautiful*, however, is by no means the ordinary travelogue that its banal name suggests. In point of fact, Dr. Zebenthofer has taken for his theme the Baroque Period in Austrian art and architecture and, with no small skill, constructed around it a distinctly interesting picture. Considering the wide field he had to cover, he has done remarkably well to include so much without giving the appearance of overcrowding. As it is, the film is a lucid, attractively presented resumé of a big subject which creates the desire to explore further.

Opening with a pleasant library sequence in which engravings of architectural designs by the Baroque artists Fischer von Erlach and Hildebrand are introduced—designs so fantastic as to seem impossible of materialization—the film devotes the major part of its length to showing such amazing buildings in actual being. Impressions of the work of various architects are built up by the skilful combination of exteriors, interiors and close-ups of detail—the warmer feeling of Southern Baroque under Italian influence being admirably conveyed. Salzburg, untouched by the ravages of the Thirty Years' War is naturally well represented, as is Vienna, and palaces, churches and monasteries from various provinces are brought in to exemplify differing styles. So from architecture to painting and sculpture, glancing at ceiling frescoes, tombs, church ornaments, the Trinity Pillars, even the fabulous animals in stone designed to embellish the vast terraced gardens, themselves in tune with the period. A dissolve from the statue of a rearing horse and rider into its living counterpart at the Spanish School of Riding at Vienna, ends the film on a well-chosen note.

The human element is ingeniously woven into the thread of the picture. Hurrying figures in street or square give point to the grandeur of the building towering above them. Monks chanting in quiet cloister, or horses splashing in ornate drinking trough lend emphasis to the primary purpose of the shots in which they are included. On the whole, the music is well fitted, the organ being effectively employed; while the intermittent commentary, obviously painstakingly devised, is couched in the correct vein and merges into the picture successfully.

British producers might well follow Dr. Zebenthofer's lead. Why not the Tudor Period in art and architecture? But not — please — Britain Beautiful.

J.R.F.T.



From B.B.C. DROITWICH, directed
by R. H. Watt (Zenifilms)

THE ORDER OF THE BATH (British). Production: Strand Film Company. Direction: Donald Taylor. Photography: George Noble. Commentary: Ivan Samson. Length: 1,000 feet.

Such a subject as bathing—intimately bound up with the daily life as it is—fairly bristles with difficulties for the director, and a tribute is hereby paid to Donald Taylor's courage in entertaining the idea of making a film about it. What is more, he leaps lightly over quite a number of his fences with amusing dexterity: he deserves to win.

Starting with the decline and fall in the popularity of bathing from Roman times to the Middle Ages, the film skips gently through the Dirty Age, with a passing glance at backscratchers, to the troubles of Victorian bath-nights. An interesting sequence on medicinal baths carries the subject up to date. Then the bathing begins in earnest and amidst a deal of rubbing and scrubbing, lathering, splashing and plenty of steam, the manifold benefits of the bath are well and truly shown. This last portion of the film suffers from undue repetition and the argument it carries would be more forcefully brought home if it were tightened up somewhat.

Commentary and musical accompaniment are effective, but Noble's photography is disappointing: he can do better work than this. The importance of *The Order of the Bath* lies in the fact that it suggests the possibility of a series of films relating to health and hygiene which, if intelligently handled, would prove of definite value and interest to the community.

J.R.F.T.

B.B.C. DROITWICH (British). Production: G.P.O. Film Unit (Grierson). Direction: R. H. Watt. Commentary spoken by A. S. Hibberd. Distributors: Zenifilms. Length: 1,400 feet.

The building and testing of the new Droitwich broadcasting station was not a subject which allowed

of items put out by the station during its normal work.

A great deal of material is covered in the course of the film; some of it is skipped over lightly, some of it the camera feels worth lingering over. For instance, the erection of the masts—a dramatic undertaking photographed to bring out every inch of their record-breaking seven hundred feet of height. It is a genuine thrill for any kind of audience and is apt to overshadow the rest of the picture. Another pleasant little interlude, however, occurs when the scissors are given a rest on a frame blocked with a square and solid end-on view of an alternator: there is nothing to do but to sit back and listen to the sound of the thing getting up to speed. It is a pleasant sensation and prepares one for the hectic function of the place that we have seen built, and of the plant moved into it.

The sound is continually handled to preserve a sort of balance of power with the pictures, and it is probably the evenness of the result which gives the film its workmanlike air of quiet distinction. D.F.R.

SO THIS IS LANCASHIRE (British). Production: Strand Film Company. Direction: Donald Taylor. Photography: G. Noble. Music: T. Foulds. Distributors: Zenifilms. Length: 1,300 feet.

In retrospect, one admires most the sense of design in the selection and arrangement of the material in this two-reeler. It is so easy, and so many have done it, to take a camera into a pot-pourri of industries and to emerge with something which may show up on the screen the squalor, or the untidiness, or the mechanical power of the region, perhaps even the craftsmanship which labours for expression in such surroundings. But it is quite another matter to bring out something which will give some rational explanation of the why and the wherefore of it all.

Taylor and Noble have tried, and I think within the limits succeeded, to put Lancashire on the screen

in its proper geographical-historical perspective. They have begun with Pennine streams and rural landscapes such as those which tempted the first cotton manufactories, and they have then found the transition stage to the factory town of the industrial era. The survey of the existing industries is then treated with the same regard to historical sequence, leading up to the electrification and speeding-up which is taking place to-day.

A tremendous number of industries and processes is touched upon, and a very fair impression given of each, so that the spectator recalls that although the picture was full of interesting details, yet he comes away with a definite time-sequence in his mind, with a historical perspective which will enable him to look at least with a little more understanding at the things about him. Nothing, either pictorially or on the sound-track, was handled in order to startle one, and the strictly fair sense of balance is repaid by the gain in constant and well-constructed thread of purpose.

D.F.R.

SECRETS OF LIFE (British).

WAKE UP AND FEED, (Direction : Jack Holmes. Photography : Frank Goodliffe).

MIXED BATHING, (Direction : Mary Field, Photography : Frank Bundy).

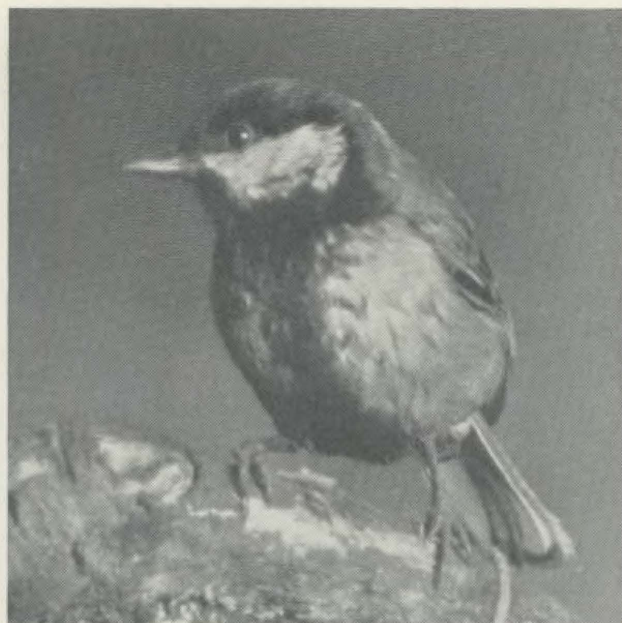
BABY ON THE ROCKS, (Editing : Mary Field. Photography : Charles Head).

WE ARE SEVEN, (Editing : Mary Field. Photography : Oliver Pike).

Production : Gaumont-British Instructional. Length : Each Approx. 1,000 feet.

These four films in the newly-launched *Secrets of Life* series provide the opportunity for an illuminating comparison in observation. *Wake up and Feed* and *Mixed Bathing* both deal with animal life at the Zoo: the facilities afforded the directors were presumably the same. One is most diverting: the other faintly amusing. Why? One has an idea behind it: the other relies entirely on the animals themselves and a mildly facetious commentary. Holmes has seized on a human weakness or two and shrewdly mirrored them in the actions of his animals. They sleep—wake up—smell food—and eat. A pelican gets into difficulties with his fish—a final effort and it is down at last—his companions applaud vigorously. This is visual and sound as they should be used.

SO THIS IS LANCASHIRE, directed by Donald Taylor (Zenifilms)

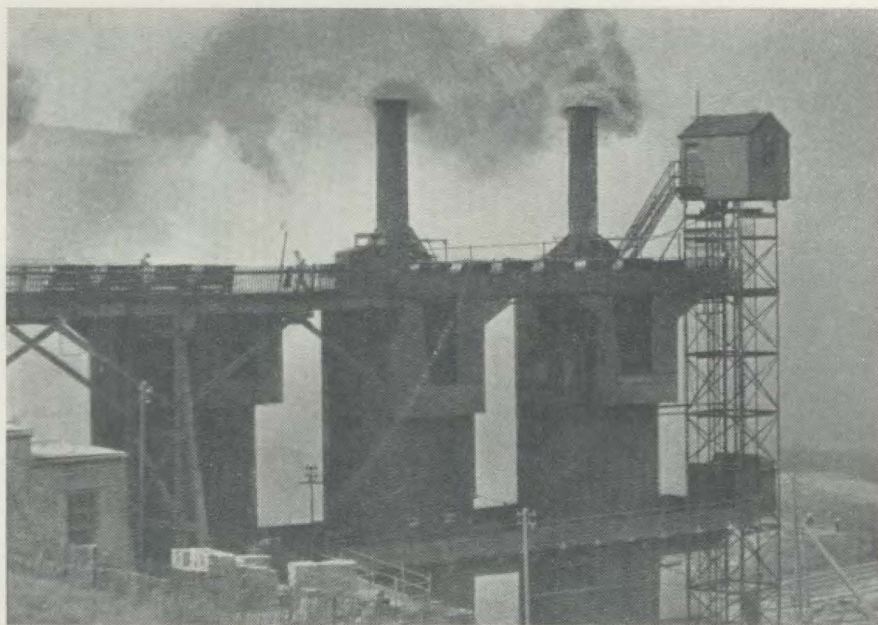


The great tit, from WE ARE SEVEN

(G.B.I.)

Miss Field, however, is content to show a succession of pictures of animals bathing, well enough in themselves, but with no connecting thread; they are just pleasant photographs and that is all. In *Baby on the Rocks* and *We are Seven* the same defect is present, though in a lesser degree. The former illustrates a few weeks in the life of a young buzzard. Here a great chance for dramatic effect is missed when the parent bird pounces on a rabbit. It is a pity, also, that it was thought necessary to include the cameraman in the film and so destroy the pleasant illusion of being alone with the birds. In *We are Seven*, a family of baby great tits fall off a branch with surprising regularity—it would have been a relief to know what happened to them all.

J.R.F.T.



FILMS AND THE SCHOOL

A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS

A PIONEER SCHOOL IN FILM EDUCATION

In the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND, Mr. F. A. Ring described an experiment with the film in elementary school teaching. Mr. Redfearn here discusses his experience in using the film at West Kensington Central School for Boys.

By C. J. N. Redfearn

THE London Central School, whose experience with films is the subject of this article, first acquired a standard silent projector in 1926, since when films, many hundreds in number, have been shown regularly. This machine was installed in a classroom adjoining the school hall, and the picture was thrown on a screen some 35 feet away on the opposite side of the hall. In order to enable inflammable films to be used, a licence was obtained, the conditions of which have, of course, to be strictly observed. As the school had no electric light the current for the 12-volt lamps used was obtained from accumulators, and the mechanism of the projector was hand-operated. About three years ago an electric light supply was brought in and the staff and the boys fitted a 1,000-watt filament lamp and a 5-inch condenser to the machine. This system of lighting, except in the case of heavily stained films, gives good illumination of the screen and but little heat. A motor was added at the same time and the troublesome turning of the

handle was at an end. The projector is used to show films to the junior and senior halves of the school in turn and about 200 boys of the same age attend each film lesson.

About eighteen months ago a 16mm. projector was bought for classroom work and for lessons to smaller assemblies in the hall.

Supply of Films

Many sources of supply of films have been used and as in the past few years some of these have vanished, others have been amalgamated and many new ones have appeared, the masters in charge have had no small difficulty in keeping touch with suitable films. Many days have been spent in the West End of London searching for new stores of films, or old stores in new addresses. The school is much indebted to the G.P.O., the High Commissioners of the Dominions, the Railways and other public bodies and industrial firms for their loan of free films. These have been our mainstay. The 16mm. machine has drawn its supplies mainly from Kodak and Ensign, but these have to be hired.

A central library of educational films is very desirable, especially for teachers out of London. It is time that something was done to unify the present scattered sources of supply.

Methods of Using the Film

For the first few years after 1926 films were shown at frequent intervals to the whole school for about an hour, the programme being chosen with but little relation to the schemes of work. This plan was



HE WOULD A-WOOING GO, by Mary Field (G.B.I.)

A scene from IRELAND,
produced by Steuart Films



succeeded by film programmes chosen to illustrate the lessons of the term. At present the method most generally used is for one of the specialist teachers to form one of the topics of his subject into a film lesson, in which the film is first put through without comment. A talk by the teacher follows, and the film is shown a second time, when its most important parts are emphasised and explained. Usually on the next day, either tests are given or composition is written on the subject of the lesson. Lately a new technique has been developed and the impression made by the film is augmented and strengthened by adding an emotional atmosphere akin to the subject by means of vocal or instrumental music and appropriate extracts from literature.

As has been already mentioned, films are frequently shown twice in one lesson. In fact, repetition is as essential in a film lesson as in any other part of the teacher's work. The same film may be repeated after an interval of some months or it may be included in the syllabus for next year.

The stopping of the projector, to obtain a still picture when showing non-flam films, is valuable, for if this is not done the film often flashes on to the next point before pupils have had time to assimilate the previous one. This is especially the case with maps and diagrams, which should be of a very simple character.

Value of Films Shown

Various members of the staff have given short criticisms of the films shown. On the whole, the comments are favourable, but there are many adverse criticisms of the inclusion of much irrelevant detail and of insufficient emphasis of the essential part of the picture, which should be placed before the children in a pointed and direct manner. The unreal atmosphere introduced by some operators who make much of what they think would be of entertainment value for the audience at the 'pictures,' should be excluded. Geographical films are often entirely without maps; the exact position of places should be indicated *immediately before* they appear on the film.

Teachers' Notes are Desirable

A copy of the captions or notes should be supplied with each film. When the film arrives the teacher wonders what is in it and what aspects of his subject it emphasises. The teacher should see the film before the lesson is given and should have at least a day to look over the notes. But, owing to the shortness of time during which a film can be retained and the demands of other activities both on the use of the school space and on the teacher's time, this is not always possible. Herein lies one of the most serious disadvantages of education by the cinema at present.

Meeting the Cost

An experiment like this is very costly and the whole of the expense has fallen on the school. To pay expenses of hiring films and running costs, collections are taken after each cinema lesson, which meet most of the outlay, and any deficiencies are made up out of general school fund.

Making a Film

A cine-camera has lately been added to our equipment, and records of the school's activities have been made. An educational and school-journey film of North Wales was taken during last year's visit to that district by a party of our boys. This has been illustrated by maps and explained by captions; the apparatus for making these has all been constructed in the handicraft centre and art-room.

One of our boys described the cinema as a welcome relief from the smeary blackboard and the dusty chalk, and it is in the quickening of interest by the additional variety of method that a good deal of the value of the film in teaching lies.

SOUND OR SILENT

THE CASE FOR THE SOUND FILM

By A. Clow Ford

The relative merits of the Sound and Silent Film in teaching are here discussed by Mr. A. Clow Ford M.B.E., B.A. and Mr. J. Fairgrieve, M.A. Mr. Fairgrieve, who is a Reader at the Institute of Education, has used the film extensively in the teaching of geography, and Mr. Clow Ford of the University of London has also had practical experience in lecturing with the film.

IN putting forward what appear to be the justifications for the use of sound in conjunction with films made for teaching purposes, it seems desirable to clear out of the way some general misconceptions that may obscure the real issues: it is necessary first of all to dismiss some spurious claims as to what the film can or should do, and secondly to specify clearly what service the film can in fact properly render in a classroom.

Sound Film Must Not Usurp Teacher's Place

The great bulk of opinion to which the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films had access was almost overwhelmingly in favour of the use of the sound film as opposed to the silent for educational work; and the chapters of their Report dealing respectively with the education of the child and adult make full reference to and full use of this view: but there were critics of that view, and their number has increased. Possibly this criticism may have been strengthened by one unfortunate passage

in the paragraph dealing with the "Form of Teaching Films": "A sound film may give a lesson through the voice and visible presence of an expert. The teacher prepares the way and follows up the impression which the lesson has created. He subordinates his personality while the film is being shown and takes the drill afterwards." The instinctive rejection by the great mass of teachers of this conception of the rôle of the sound film in the classroom was inevitable and thoroughly satisfactory. And though the two chapters referred to are in the main conceived in a quite different spirit, the fear that the machine would diminish the rôle of the living personality was bound to be voiced somewhere and would, if a justifiable fear, properly banish the sound film from the classroom. Indeed, all films that the writer has seen where the expert has been shown have, in the main, been wholly unsuitable for ordinary classroom work. The audible and visible presence in the film of the expert, coupled with the subordination of the personality of the teacher actually present in the classroom, is then a quite unacceptable conception of the rôle of the teaching film. The only function possible is that of an aid—to do something that the competent teacher cannot do, or do so well, or do so conveniently—to be used at the discretion of the teacher, who will indeed make clear his capacity as a teacher, according to the extent to which he can employ so powerful an aid as a sound film and yet in fact remain the dominating factor in the teaching process.

Two Kinds of Film to be Considered

If the foregoing propositions are accepted it leaves two kinds of classroom film to be considered—general utility and specialised—both of which have

(Continued on page 28)



WEATHER FORECAST, the G.P.O. film referred to by Mr. Clow Ford. Directed by Evelyn Spice

FILMS IN TEACHING?

THE CASE FOR THE SILENT FILM

By J. Fairgrieve

A reply to Mr. Clow Ford

I HAVE been asked to say why I prefer the silent film for teaching geography in school. But first let me be clear as to what it is that I do prefer, and what it is that I am not considering. I am not considering the uses of films in teaching adults, though the idea is rather intriguing of a film depicting a professor giving a lecture which he has given for the last thirty years which might be used while he departs to Switzerland for a holiday. I am not considering films to be shown to mass groups in picture houses or to two or three different classes in the school hall. I am not for the moment considering even background films; I am not considering that as an alternative to a spoken commentary on the sound track a teacher should supply a commentary of his own on a silent film. There is something to be said even for this, since to balance a lack of precise knowledge of the film a teacher has a more precise knowledge of his class, but let that pass. Now Mr. Clow Ford's article is obviously written from the adult education point of view—his reference to a film "presenting a particular principle" is significant—and he deals at some length with background films so I do not feel that I have much to "answer."

What is a "Teaching Film"?

I am considering the use in schools of films which have been called "teaching films" and I offer the following notes in reply to what Mr. Ford says about them, though what I say refers to schools, and he speaks, mainly at least, with reference to adult education.

The name "teaching film" is unsatisfactory, for it could include:

- (a) films which by themselves do the whole job of teaching in the sense used by Mr. Steuart in the last number of SIGHT AND SOUND, and
- (b) films by the aid of which a teacher teaches. Naturally I do not consider (a) at all, only (b). The films are to be used in the same way as are books, blackboards, models, paper, pens, ink and the other material aids which the teacher uses as subservient to his lesson.

There are two initial difficulties. One is that there are so few of these films, so very few, that it is



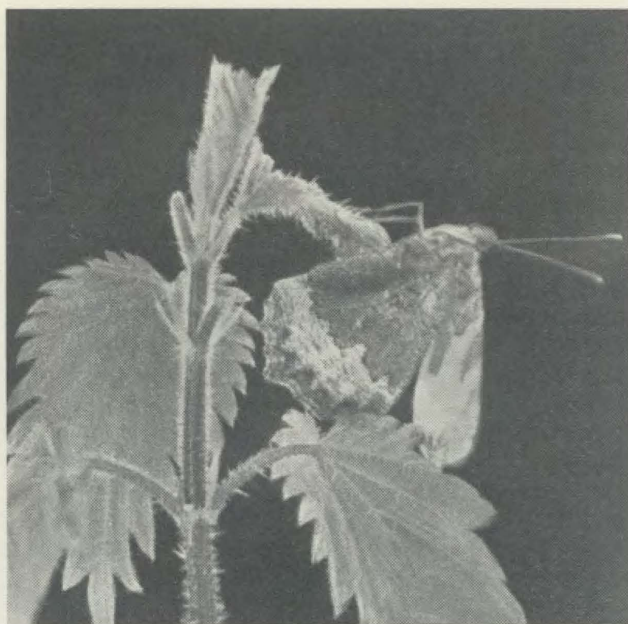
MOROCCO, a Pathescope Silent Film

certain that comparatively few people have ever seen one, let alone used one with which to teach. For this reason there are very few people competent to speak of the matter. Further, outside the teaching profession there are very few people who know anything of the technique of school teaching or indeed believe that there is any technique.

The Silent Film is not "Obsolete"

There is another matter also on which it is as well to be clear. Most of the advocates of talky films in schools start with the assumption that because talky films came after silent they must be an advance for our particular purpose; but the sun is no more "obsolete," a word used of silent films, because its light existed before that from, say, coal, than are silent films because they existed before talkies. Second thoughts may sometimes be best, but they are not always so, and in view of this attitude, that I find fairly general, it seems necessary to state that the value of the talky film for school has to be proved, not assumed. I might accept Mr. Ford's argument that "the great bulk of opinion to which the Commission on Educational Films had access was overwhelmingly in favour of the use of the sound film" if I did not also remember that much

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BUTTERFLIES AND NETTLES, by Mary Field (G.B.I.)

(Continued from page 26)

a proper place in any balanced course of systematic teaching. General utility films may be used for supplying background, in say Geography or History; demonstrations, as in science where a principle may be studied in the laboratory and rapid demonstration of some alternative or variant study of the same principle may be desired; revision or introductory lessons, where a rapid survey is the objective. Specialised films are such as seek to present a particular principle. And there has been perhaps some tendency for teachers to think that in the future the classroom film will be (a) short—three minutes, (b) as simple as possible—having eliminated from it anything that is not deliberately selected as essentially relevant, and (c) pedagogically technical—where the analysis necessary for the presentation of a problem demands a more concentrated intellectual effort than that generally associated with a visit to the “talkies.”

The Rôle of “Background” Film

Broadly speaking, “background” films will relate a principle already studied (or to be studied) to some field of general application, as, for example, the recently produced G.P.O. film, *Weather Forecast* which could serve admirably the purposes of a background lesson for a physical geography course: and it would rob the film of a very large part of its value if the sound of wind and weather and the voice tones of anxiety and confidence were omitted: the diminished value of the film would be parallel to the diminished value in actual life of a person deprived of the power of hearing. Other disadvantages would be felt too: but they may be more specifically seen in reference to cases where a rapid survey is the objective. Take, for example, the study of *Roots* recently shown by G.-B. Instructional, where nature communicates no sound of its own, where

SOUND versus

sound can be of use exclusively by way of commentary: in a single 10-minute reel the number of points to be noted is so great, the order and manner of their presentation so liable to legitimate variation that it seems impossible for any teacher, even if he had made the film himself, to interpolate his commentary as the film is run through. Experience has shown the writer that with a film he had used on several occasions and had had run through immediately prior to his lecture, when by force of circumstances the film had to be shown on a silent projector, he could not nearly accurately enough time his comments to make the film fully useful. It may be said that a greater familiarity with the film to be used would overcome this difficulty: but no teacher can afford the time or the expense to do this: such a memorisation of a film would be comparable to memorising the page and paragraph in which a particular point is made in a book. The fact is that the increased intricacy of teaching technique when the film is used calls for a more accurate co-ordination of all the contributors than is necessary with static aids such as book, black-board and lantern slide.

Sound and the Specialised Film

To the writer, then, it seems reasonably clear that for general utility films a commentary by sound is indispensable: but the crux of the issue of sound versus silent films may be thought to lie in the specialised film, i.e., where the film has been specifically made to present a particular point, process, or principle. Can it be said that sound is necessary or desirable in such cases? To seek an answer to this question implies an incursion into the somewhat differing techniques of the presentation of different subjects—a task that any writer will essay with some diffidence.

In the domain of mathematics, and its application to Astronomy, a few films have been produced, quite short, and severely simplified, and with commentary both by caption and by voice. Deprived of both, and the students' attention directed only by the teacher in the classroom, such films lose greatly in power: and there are many instances when it is desirable to leave the diagram that is being developed in the picture free from the complication of captions or indicative arrows and yet to call attention to some point at a particular moment; and a carefully synchronised commentary seems the obvious way. Except in connection with crystal growth, the writer has not yet seen any film that is a convincing improvement on laboratory work for specialised teaching of the physical sciences, and it must be left, therefore, to others who may be devising such films to speak: but the group of biological sciences offers a wide field for exact teaching films where captions would break the essential continuity of picture, where the anticipatory preparation of the mind for a given

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SILENT FILMS

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the same could be said of opinion on the use of the standard film as opposed to the sub-standard.

It is relevant indeed to point out in the first place that it is not likely that technically our schools will ever be able to compete with picture houses to which children go, so that it would be well to use films in ways as different as possible from those in the picture houses, so as to avoid "odorous comparisons"; and in the second, that we do not know the relative value for *teaching* purposes of talk on the one hand and captions of various lengths on the other, shown for 1, 2, 3, 4 . . . n seconds to children of 7, 8, 9 . . . 18 years of age. When we know that, we can begin to complicate the position by introducing such matters as supplementary explanatory booklets on films for the use of the teacher. In the meantime the whole business is a matter of opinion.

That being so, it is a significant piece of evidence that every teacher I have met who has used films in the classroom, has been very strongly in favour of silent films and against films with commentary. It is also significant that I know no school teacher who is not against sound films with running commentary, and only one training college lecturer who thinks that some day such films may be used. I do not pretend to know the views of all teachers, but I have a fairly extensive acquaintance, at least with teachers of geography who are probably the most numerous group of potential users of films in teaching.

Three Reasons for Preferring the Silent Film

As for my own reasons for preferring silent films in school:

(i) My first is that in the classroom it is the children who ought to be doing most talking, and they have little enough chance as it is; in a thirty-minute lesson each of thirty children can be allowed only one minute. If they have to compete with an unknown commentator as well as with their teacher they won't have much chance of saying anything at all. If there is any value in the film in supplying a stimulus, it is surely necessary that one of the most important results of the stimulus (to children if not to adults) should be given an outlet. The

youngster should at once be allowed to put his ideas into his own words.

(ii) My second is that in the classroom the children work; they may work, and do good work, by looking at a film as they may work by reading a book; but in so far as the conditions of the two activities are similar the children are merely having so much information pumped into them, and in so far as they are different it has to be pointed out that the amount of, say, geographical information put before a child in a minute of film is overwhelmingly greater than that which he can read in a minute. He just cannot take in seven minutes of geography film in seven minutes at one showing. If he does, it can only be pure cram. The implication is that the teaching film must be stopped, for if there is one thing that the teacher knows (though it takes a long time for young teachers to learn) it is that he can go only at the rate at which the pupils can assimilate the stuff; he knows that it is not what the teacher can say in a lesson that matters, but what the pupil can take in; it is not what the film can say in seven minutes that matters, but what the child can take in.

Further, the film must be stopped not only because the youngsters must have time to assimilate the information, given in picture form, but because they must have time to think about it and *work* with it; this is education while the other is only instruction. A good teaching film not only supplies facts, but supplies matter for inference, and these matters for inference cannot be left till the end of the film. They must be dealt with as they appear on the screen. It is for these reasons that teachers are unanimously of opinion that teaching films must on at least one showing be stopped to allow of question and answer, questions both by teacher and pupils. There is again the less need for an outside commentary especially as sound films are not at the best very easily stopped at the point

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THEBES, a Pathescope Silent Film

The Sound Film

(Continued from page 28)

presentation can best be done by sound, leaving the teacher free to observe the reaction of the class. As soon as the subject of a course of study concerns itself with human beings either in relation to their environment, as in Geography, or in relation to their fellow-beings, as in History, the difficulty increases: for it is rarely possible to isolate the illustration of a principle in such cases, and the commentary becomes both more necessary and more difficult to insert at the right point in the film.

Totally different may be the film that deals with what may be called the creative products of human effort—language, drama, music; and though some brilliant efforts have been made in this direction, nothing so far has been made that can be called a successful specialised teaching film. The establishment of a technique of teaching these subjects by film has still to be worked out; but both on *a priori* grounds and the clearly indicated promise of film technics the writer feels convinced that in these fields too the future of the teaching film will favour the sound and not the silent film.

Safety Teaching by Film

(Continued from page 15)

for the teacher to use his own method of dealing with the subject as against a stereotyped description and a strange voice, not to say strange pronunciation and unfamiliar accent. Another advantage is that the same film might be shown to children of different ages and the necessary talk adapted by the teacher to the needs and character of the children (e.g., in town and country, etc.). Local circumstances can thus be used by the teacher to point the moral of the film. As against this there is, of course, the attractiveness of the talkie film which is the latest development, and corresponds most closely to what the boy or girl sees at the cinema.

The N.S.F.A. has adopted various other media for imparting "Safety First" instruction to the children. In particular, reference might be made to the *Child Safety Service*, which has found a growing appreciation from Education Authorities and teachers. This consists of a Child Safety Bulletin and a specially designed poster, which are issued each month except for the longer vacations, and which are based on definite hazards which statistics show to be the most prolific causes of accidents to children.

Already more than 120 Education Authorities are participating in this Service.

The N.S.F.A. has issued a large amount of interesting literature and material which should be of the greatest assistance in imparting Safety First principles to children. Specimen copies can be obtained from The General Secretary, The National "Safety First" Association (Inc.), 52, Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1.

The Silent Film

(Continued from page 29)

desired. The question of "timing" a commentary by the teacher does not arise. If there is to be a commentary it seems obvious that it must be in the form of a caption which may be stopped and studied, not in the form of a fleeting voice.

(iii) Here I would say that I would like to have the experience of anyone who has ever taught in school by the use of a sound film. I have never met one myself and I would say frankly that though I should welcome the experience as an experience, I am afraid it would be an awful experience. I have recently been experimenting with the use, alternately, of the simplest form of hand turned projector, and a motor projector fitted with an instantaneous stopping device, starting handle and speed regulator in addition to a reversing switch; experience with the latter projector in teaching has been something in the nature of a nightmare. With the former I do not need to take my hand from the one handle and I stop at once when I wish to do so, largely because it is easier to do nothing than to do something; I can, in fact, give full attention to the class. With the latter, though the device stops the film instantaneously, I don't touch it instantaneously; I have to do something which is more difficult than to stop doing something; my hand has perhaps been holding the speed regulator or been by my side; my eyes have been on the class or the screen: there is a lag between my brain and my hand: I miss the stopping device in the dark and the desired frame goes past. What is worse I have taken my attention from the class. Of course, one can accustom oneself to some extent to such a projector, but if I, with my experience of projectors, find some difficulty it is not likely that the great majority of teachers will be anything but perturbed in such a situation. If to these simple devices is added some sound arrangements I am very much afraid that the day of teaching films in schools will be very much delayed.

A Simple Projector

That this is not only my own opinion is obvious in a most interesting article by Mr. Ring in the last number of SIGHT AND SOUND where he points out the "desirability" of having two members of the staff present, for "*one must be able to give undivided attention to the machine.*" This, of course, is not classroom teaching at all. It is better than nothing, but it will not carry us very far. If the film is to be used as a normal teaching aid the teacher must depend upon his own resources and be independent of any other member of the staff. The projector to be used by the least experienced teacher is the simplest that can be produced and this is one which will show a silent film.

More might be said, but I have said enough to indicate that there is a case for the silent film.

EDUCATION IN CINEMA OR CLASSROOM?

By A. W. Pegrum, District Inspector L.C.C.

Mr. A. W. Pegrum, B.A., who acted as Adviser to the Committee which organised the St. Pancras Children's Matinee Experiment in 1932 and 1933, gives his views on the value of educational films outside the classroom.

IN this article I state my personal views, which are not necessarily those of anybody or Any Body else.

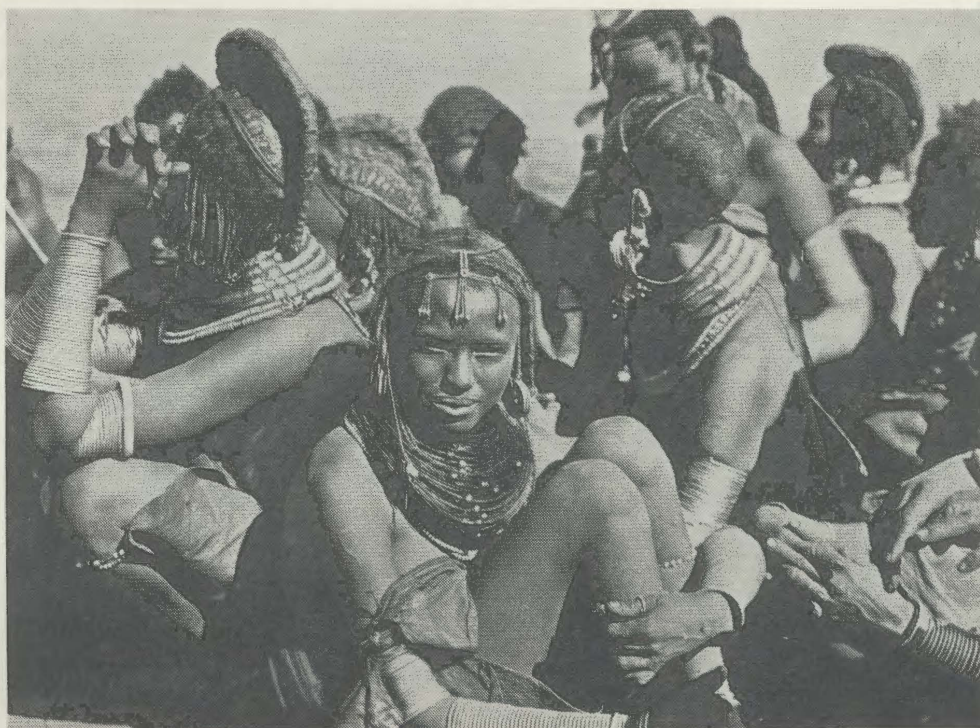
It is well to keep clearly in mind two aspects of film education in connection with the schools. The one is the use of the ordinary public cinema for the exhibition of films of educational and artistic value to audiences of children drawn from the schools; the other is the use of the film in the classroom. Each of these has its own particular aim: that of the former is the raising of popular taste, that of the latter the improvement of classroom facilities for specific education. This division is convenient so long as we recognise that the boundaries are ill-defined, that the territories overlap. It is with the former of these aspects that I have been asked briefly to deal.

Educating Film Taste

The cinema already claims the patronage of a very high proportion of the urban child population. It is generally agreed that many of the films our children see, especially in the cheaper cinemas in areas where poverty prevails, are not calculated to develop the artistic taste of the child, nor are the pictures, which emphasise disproportionately the extravagant, sensational and emotional aspects of life as lived by minorities, calculated to give the child a sane and reasonable view of life. One of the national problems of the moment is, therefore, this: How are we to build up a discriminating public taste for films? The most sensible way is

by education rather than by prohibition; and education is most profitable when it begins with the young.

The classroom is not the place where education in film taste is likely as yet to be very profitable. However much we may regret it, school is something largely apart from the world of men and affairs. The sinister walls and the locked gates, still characteristic of many schools, indicate, even if they do not develop, an attitude of exclusiveness as well as of compulsion. The factors which control work and conduct in school are still very largely artificial, because they are arbitrarily imposed by the conditions of compulsory attendance, mass methods of discipline and instruction, and examinations. Most children leaving school for the last time throw, literally or metaphorically, their school books into a corner with a sigh of relief and a determination to have done with all that they, and the conditions which they imply, connote for them. This attitude is almost certain to be developed towards films shown under classroom conditions. The child will regard the subjects of such films as definitely a part of an experience forced upon him with the rest of school conditions, and though he may welcome them at school as by contrast bright and interesting interludes, he will turn from them nevertheless, as



From BABOONA, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson's travel film (Fox)

he turns from the books and the regulations which the school imposes upon the ordering of his own affairs and upon the conduct of his life. Consequently the use of films in the classroom, however valuable in other respects and for other purposes, is unlikely to have more than a minimum influence upon the raising of popular taste.

The projectors available for classroom use have hardly passed as yet beyond the experimental stage of production. They are continually the subject of improvement. This does not mean that they are not already an excellent aid to classroom teaching, but it does mean that the children are well aware of the difference in the quality of the pictures shown as compared with those seen at the ordinary cinema. The child has a prejudice for the real thing and tends to follow the example of St. Paul.

Unless we accept the popular "wait-and-see" view, that the development of public taste in films is immaterial or impossible of attainment by an attack at the school age, we should surely be acting wisely by making proper provision for visits to the cinema by children. The question then arises: What is proper provision? Before attempting to answer this question, we must consider a further fact.

Equipping Schools with Apparatus

The apparatus required for showing films in the classroom is expensive as well as liable to go out of date in a short time. The necessity of hiring films does not limit the expense to the initial outlay for the purchase of a projector. Many schools are not supplied with electric current and some have no rooms which can be darkened. Thus to equip schools generally with the necessary apparatus and to provide for the regular supply of films would involve an expense which few Education Authorities can at present contemplate incurring. Schools have also other and very pressing needs which must take precedence before the provision of cinema

equipment, although allowance should always now be made for this provision when new schools are built. It is, however, evident that the provision of a projector must be left to the initiative of the individual local school until such time as the public realises that the provision of facilities for education is a highly productive national investment, or at least until its elected representatives dare to act in this sense and for this purpose.

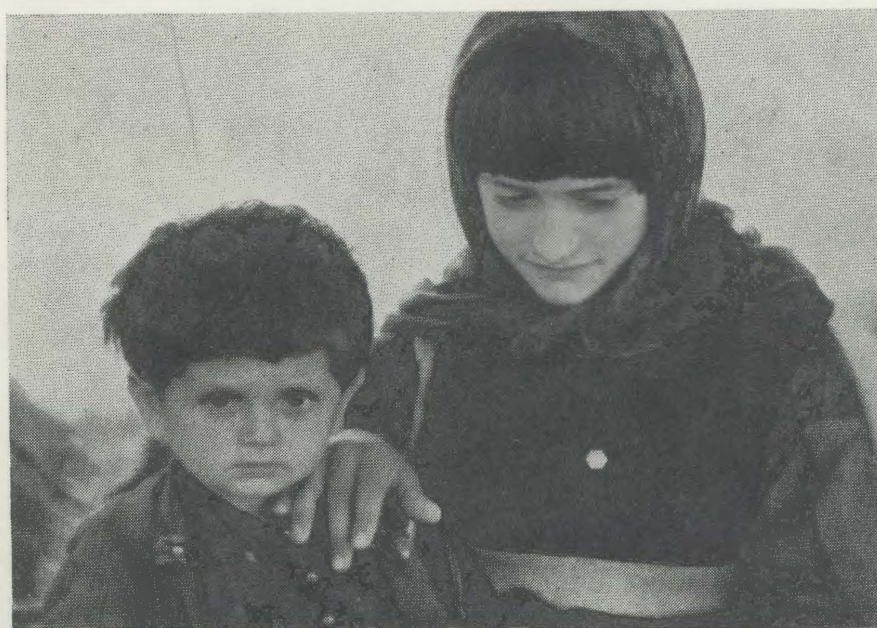
When, then, we seek an answer to the question we have raised: "What is proper provision?" we find there are really two needs to be met. We have to educate the taste of the rising generation and we have to make available for our children, as far as we can, the unique opportunities for education which the film affords.

Value of Mass Demonstration

In 1932 and 1933 the Head Teachers of St. Pancras attempted to find an answer to our question in the following way. They hired a well equipped cinema, centrally situated in regard to the schools of the district, on certain mornings when the cinema was not normally open to the public. For each performance they selected 1,000 children of comparable age and attainment from the local schools and exhibited a programme of three films. Two of these films were chosen for their bearing upon the curricula common to the schools concerned; the third film was selected for its general interest and artistic qualities. The programmes were varied to meet the needs of the different groups of children and an interlude between the two sections of the programme was arranged to give relief.

These exhibitions were highly successful. They showed the practicability of such use of the cinema and demonstrated how willing the controlling forces in the cinema world were to co-operate in the educational effort. They also showed that such local exhibitions can be arranged at a comparatively small cost and that the local unit is of such a size, that while it is possible to arrange for exhibitions to groups of children of similar attainments, it is not so large as to involve much time in travelling to and from the cinema.

Here then is a method, comparatively cheap and with every promise of effectiveness, by which both the needs indicated can be met. Even when every school has its projector, the mass demonstration, as the Head Teachers of St. Pancras point out, will still have its place in the scheme of film education because the two forms have distinct as well as allied uses. Meanwhile surely the time has come to press for the extended use of an opportunity which has been shown to be available and valuable.



SHQYPNIA, Land of the Mountain Eagle

(Zenifilms)

FILMS IN ENGINEERING TRAINING

By Flight-Lt. H. Nelson, M.B.E.

The following article, which is intended as an introduction to the question of Films in Engineering, suggests some ways in which the film may be used in training engineers, and indicates some of the subjects considered best suited to film treatment.

THE use of cinematograph films in engineering has had little attention up to the present, but the remarkable success of recent productions opens the question of their general use for training purposes.

Films can be used in engineering as follows:—

- (a) For the training of mechanics.
- (b) For the training of engineers.
- (c) For studying engineering problems.

Training Mechanics

Investigations are being undertaken to ascertain the value of sound films for teaching mechanics between the ages of 15 and 19 years. Such films, it is considered, can also be used for the elementary instruction of engineers as well as for recapitulation in the case of more advanced students.

The films required for the training of mechanics are varied and depend upon the type of mechanic to be trained. These films should combine the practical method of operation of tools and simple machines together with the theory underlying their design and use.

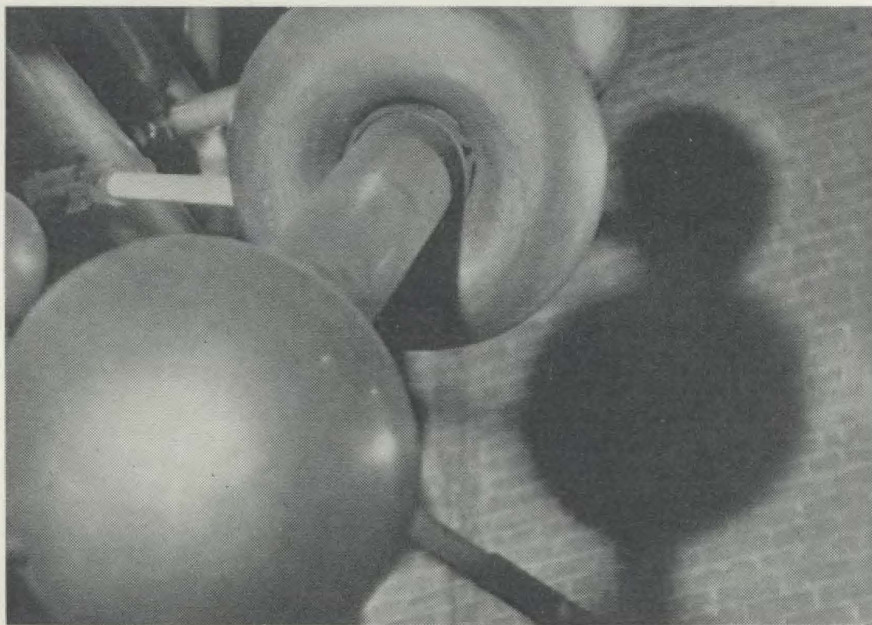
As the training of the mechanic advances the films should show the higher processes of his trade. For engine fitters the theory of the steam or internal combustion engine should be shown; for wireless mechanics such subjects as the thermionic valve could be depicted. For trades such as shipwrights, aircraft assemblers, jig and tool fitters, the films should show the results of bad workmanship as for instance, sections of riveted plates showing how too long a rivet fails to make a satisfactory joint; breaking test might be shown for good and for bad riveted joints.

It is doubtful if the cost of producing films of this type by an individual company for its own use would be justified in view of the small number of apprentices in any locality, but these films would, without doubt, be of immense value at technical evening schools.

All films of this type are suitable for the training of draughtsmen.

Training Engineers

The films required for the training of engineers should consist of those used for the training of mechanics and, in addition, films of a more theoretical nature and those dealing with the organisation and administration of engineering works. Films of a theoretical nature would be expensive to produce but might repay the producer or the owner of the copyright on account of the general use which could be made of them at various colleges and universities where engineering training is undertaken. As instances of this type of film, theory of wheel teeth, elasticity, stresses and strains are suggested, as these should be understood by practically all engineers. Films dealing with organisation and administration should show various mass production methods. A number of firms have already produced films of this type for advertising purposes; whilst not suitable for the purpose in mind, these show what can be accomplished. The processes when shown on the screen should be detailed and slow. During the period of instruction films explaining the method of production of lubricants, petrols, etc., should be shown, although the method of production of these may not be in the curriculum.



Weird apparatus used for producing high voltage sparks. From FACE OF BRITAIN, by Rotha (G.B.I.)

Studying Engineering Problems

Films required for studying engineering problems have a wide application and these by their very nature, vary. After the solution of the problem these films would be of value in the training of engineers. If used for training purposes a commentary should be added by the investigator stating:

- (i) the problem;
- (ii) the method of attack;
- (iii) the solution.

Production and Use of Engineering Films

It has been ascertained that films are of most value in teaching subjects which are difficult to visualise such as electricity, carburation and theory of flight. These films are necessarily of the 'cartoon' type and are expensive to produce.

When the subject is of practical nature the value of sound films is not so pronounced; for instance, little value is obtained from films dealing with the use and operation of tools, such as the micrometer, vernier, grinding and automatic machines. The working of internal combustion engines, gear boxes, differential gears and subjects of this type can, however, be shown diagrammatically and have proved a great success.

As organisation has a very definite application to engineering training, its practice may be demonstrated on the screen whilst the principles are being explained.

From the experience already gained it has been shown that sound films cannot replace any of the instructional staff, but that they can be considered a valuable adjunct.

The showing of the complete film should not extend beyond a period of 40 minutes and the film should be divided into at least 4 reels, each reel being capable of independent use. The appropriate reel should be used a number of times during that part of the relevant instruction and the complete film used at the end or during the revision period.

If possible, an occasional short humorous interlude is of value if it can be made to have a definite application to the subject being taught. Care, however, must be taken to ensure that this is not overdone.

Another point of importance is that the demonstrator or lecturer should appear on the screen at some time, preferably at the beginning and again at the end. If he or she is not seen the commentary loses personal force. If, however, the demonstrator or lecturer appears too often the student can tell you all about his gold teeth or other peculiarity but little about the subject matter.

Films for the training of mechanics and engineers should be produced under the direction of a fully competent engineer in that branch of the subject being filmed, assisted by an experienced and successful teacher. The co-operation of the latter is of great importance if full benefit of the sound film is to be obtained.

A "Creeping" Title is Useful

A 'creeping' title is of advantage at the beginning of all technical films. This title should explain the

object of the film and any outstanding points to which the students' attention should be called. The beginning of a film is often lost to the student, the 'creeping' title focuses the eyes and concentrates the mind on the screen before the serious part of the film commences.

NEWS OF EDUCATIONAL FILMS

Wireless Talk on Films by Julian Huxley

On April 1st Mr. Julian Huxley gave the first of a series of broadcast talks on filming plants and animals. He dealt with some of the problems which arise in making films like *The Private Life of the Gannets*, which he himself directed. He hoped that there would be an increase in the number of cinemas specialising in nature and other non-fictional films for which he believed there was a very real public demand. He also hoped that the near future would see a number of developments which were essential to the full realisation of the possibilities of the film as an educational medium. Among these were the provision of projectors in schools, museums and libraries, a complete and critical catalogue of the available films and a central distributing library for these films with local branches throughout the country.

* * *

Exhibition of Screen Aids to Education

The Scottish Educational Cinema Society is staging an Exhibition of Screen Aids to Education similar to that held last year. The show, which is being held in the MacLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, on Friday and Saturday 12th and 13th April, is being officially opened at 5 p.m. on the Friday by Sir Charles Cleland, K.B.E., a Governor of the British Film Institute and Honorary President of the Society.

It is expected that this year's exhibition will be an improvement on the admittedly successful display of last year. All the available floor space has been taken up and everything directly connected with the use of the film for education is on view.

In order that those interested may have ample opportunity of seeing the various types of apparatus under actual working conditions, two projection theatres are provided, each of which is capable of holding about 200.

* * *

Opening of New Studios for Educational Films

An important event marking new progress in the development of educational films took place when Mr. H. Ramsbotham, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, on February 18th opened the new Studios at 54, Cleveland Street, London, W.1., designed by G.B. Instructional for the production of educational and cultural films. They are the only studios in the world devoted entirely to this purpose. The company have made provisional arrangements to complete regularly a schedule of production of at least 50 reels per annum. Last year 62 reels were finished and it seems reasonable to suppose that with this new studio the output will be greatly increased. While the call for this type of film is still limited, the creation of the new studio anticipates a growing demand which is likely to come from education authorities and teachers, as more schools become equipped for showing films.

* * *

Mr. Ramsbotham at Grimsby

"In the use of the film in school we are a long way behind some European countries. But the supply of educational films will be immensely increased if local authorities are less timorous and will encourage a wider use of the films in their schools." Mr. H. Ramsbotham, M.P., made this statement in speaking at the recent annual dinner of the Grimsby and District Association of the N.U.T. Membership of the British Film Institute was open to all authorities. The Institute, Mr. Ramsbotham said, was available for advice, the suppliers were ready with technical assistance and all that was wanted was a little enterprise, a little energy and a little money. It was possible to give children a taste for good films just as they were given a taste for good books.

PUBLICATIONS

THE CHALLENGE OF EVEREST, written by G. J. Cons for use with the Rutledge Mount Everest Expedition Film.

NEW WESTERN ELECTRIC DEPARTURE IN EDUCATIONAL FILMS

In connection with their release of the film recording the Mount Everest Expedition of 1933, the Western Electric Company, Ltd., have published a reader specially prepared for use with the film by G. J. Cons, M.A., of Goldsmith's College, London. This reader is entitled *The Challenge of Everest*.

It is suggested that the reader should be studied by students before and after seeing the film, firstly on account of the difficulty of appreciating the conditions of the climb, and secondly to obtain an understanding of the geography of the district.

For teaching purposes, therefore, the film and the book go together, and since presumably the film inspired the book it is necessary to review the film briefly first. Bearing in mind the fact that the film was shot by an amateur it must not be studied closely on matters of technique; for the present purpose it is sufficient to examine it solely from the teaching point of view. The film contains many beautiful shots of the mountain scenery through which the Expedition travelled, but the tempo of the film is very slow and, as inevitable in an unsuccessful attempt on the mountain, lacks a climax. The film really possesses little light and shade, so that these must be added by preparation beforehand. This fault, in my opinion, might have been overcome to some extent (a) in the cutting, or (b) by breaking up the commentary and introducing some characteristic sound or music in counterpoint.

As a record of an attempt to climb Mount Everest the film naturally treats the experiences of the Expedition. Hence to obtain the best from the film it must be studied from this angle. Much of its utility will be lost if it be studied, for example, solely as a geographical film. Of course the climb is dependent upon the physical nature of the mountain, but in the film the geography is incidental to the climb. Much interesting and useful information is supplied thus incidentally.

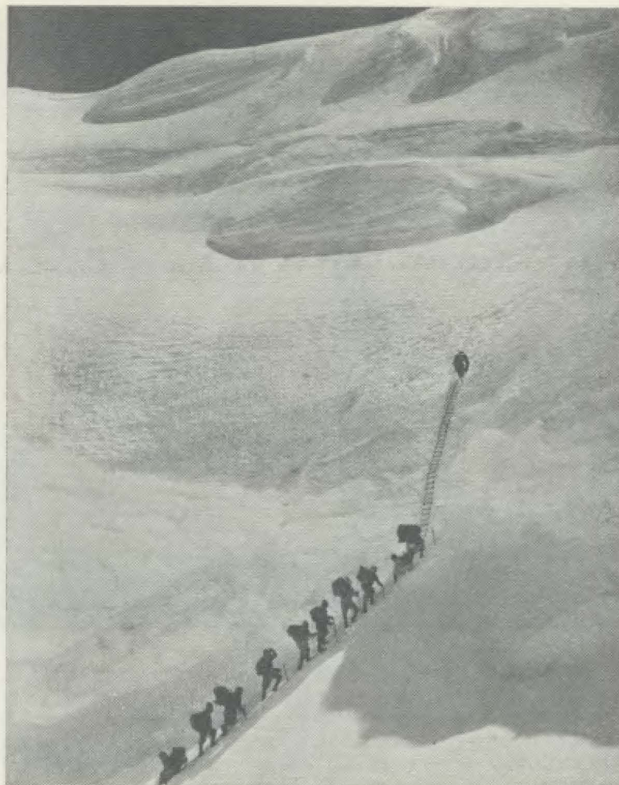
Remembering that (a) the film must be studied as a record of human endeavour and (b) that the teacher must make his own climaxes, the book will be reviewed largely from the way in which it provides for these two objects.

In an introduction the book states: "It is important that this introductory work should be carried out in such a way that the pupils are not only ready, but also eager to see the film." Mr. Cons has closely followed the film and commentary in his book, but he does not assist very much in fulfilling this admirable idea in that he makes far too few references to the actual film. Here is an excellent historical account of the earlier attempts and his story of the 1933 Expedition is packed with facts. It makes very interesting reading and certainly provides for excellent ground work. But it tends to stand out as an individual account of the Expedition, instead of being a guide to, and therefore an integral part of the film. This is again the fault of referring far too seldom to the film itself and then only from the geographical point of view.

In the end of the book Mr. Cons includes some questions of the narrative type to be answered after seeing the film. In my experience the "New" type of questionnaire is far more successful with film teaching than the narrative form and I think that attempts to question children from this set would meet with certain failure with the exception possibly of question 3. The film does not provide adequate knowledge for the remainder.

Provided that the teacher bears in mind the two objects mentioned above, he will undoubtedly find Mr. Cons' book a stimulating reader and useful in providing material for the groundwork necessary for appreciating the film to the full.

A.M.L.



Nearing the summit of Everest. Bad weather subsequently forced the party to return. A scene from the EVEREST FILM which is now being offered to schools by the Western Electric Hiring Service

CINE PHOTOGRAPHY FOR AMATEURS, by J. H. Reyner, Chapman & Hall, 10/6.

The rate at which sub-standard cinematography has been progressing during the last few years may be measured by the speed with which reference works on the subject require renewing.

The first edition of this book was produced in 1931, the preface to the new second edition is dated November, 1934, and already one can point to changes which have since taken place. For example, a 500 watt projection lamp is mentioned as an extreme case of high wattage—the 1000 watt lamp being then unthought of. Also a variety of trifling changes have occurred in the apparatus market since the particulars given in the appendix were compiled. For example, the 16mm. 'Kodatox' and the 9.5mm. 'Kid' have been withdrawn, the R.C.A. sound-camera introduced, and the price of sound-on-film projectors has fallen substantially. But these are details which do not detract from the very real value of the book. It contains encyclopaedic information on the questions which confront the amateur cinematographer. Yet it avoids being a medley of disconnected tips. The fundamental principles of each matter dealt with are lucidly set out, so that the reader should find himself well equipped for applying his mind to his own problems as they crop up. Separate chapters deal with the principles of cine-photography—lenses—exposure—lighting (indoor and outdoor)—colour (use of filters and colour-films)—how to make good films (a miscellany of advice on the technique of the amateur cameraman, scenario-writer and director)—projection—editing and titling—trick effects and special subjects—the dark room—home talkies. There are also five appendices—two of formulae and three of apparatus. In fact, it would be difficult to suggest a side of the subject not adequately dealt with. Possibly it would have been of interest to some if reference had been made to photo-micrography, and possibly advice on the photography of industrial processes would have been welcome



Reproduced from
"Cine-photography for Amateurs"

An enlargement from a 16mm. film illustrating the happy grouping which may be obtained with a little patience. The characters are only just realising the presence of the camera.

to the growing class of amateur photographers who try to film their own, or other people's, works.

There are, unfortunately, one or two printer's errors which ought not to have survived proof-reading. There are also naturally certain points on which everyone will not agree with Mr. Reyner. Why, for example, should he warn the projectionist against keeping up a running commentary on his film? No one tells the magic-lantern lecturer that he ought to flash on reading-matter between his slides and keep silent himself. However, perhaps everything ought to be done to encourage the full titling of films. The amateur cinematographer will not be making full use of his medium until he can produce for circulation multiple copies of films which can be regarded as self-explanatory. He will then be able to claim his share of attention in the documentary and scholastic field. With regard to this point I notice with interest Mr. Reyner's suggestion that amateurs should have a negative made from their reversal prints, after editing is complete, but before undue wear from projection has taken place. Mr. Reyner favours this method as against the making from the original reversal print of further reversal copies, which is the method advocated by the Kodak Company, whose experience in this matter necessarily carries great weight.

On one point only I cannot follow Mr. Reyner at all. What in the world does he mean by saying in a foot-note on p. 89 that good screen illumination requires an intensity of '45 foot-candles'? Is this a misprint for 4.5 foot-candles? Even so, if he means screen-brightness with the projector running with the shutter on, it would be a figure more appropriate for the theatre-screen than the amateur screen.

H.D.W.

HOME PROCESSING by P. W. Harris, Geo. Newnes, Ltd. 3/6.

MAKING HOME MOVIES, by D. Charles Ottley, George Newnes, Ltd. 3/6.

THESE two books are both written for the home constructor. They are written in the practical manner of the magazine *Home Movies and Talkies* from which both make numerous quotations. The aim of Mr. Harris's book is expressed in the introduction. "In the following pages I hope to show exactly how, after you have exposed your picture on any of the makes of stock now available, you can produce films at home which are fully the equal of, if not better than, those processed by professional houses." The various chapters are concerned with films and their properties, the principles of development (including the advantages and disadvantages of negative-positive and reversal development), developers and how to mix them, the relative advantages of drum and frame development, sound advice on general

equipment, washing, hints on drying and the use of a printer. In addition there is a valuable appendix giving weights and measures, formulae, a number of extremely practical hints and the average prices of the various chemicals mentioned. There are also diagrams and a large number of well printed half-tone plates illustrating the apparatus described. The book is in short, a complete guide to home processing. All the information given has been checked, the author tells us, by experimental work in his own laboratory. The result is a thoroughly useful little book, in which there is little to criticise. The explanation of gamma might have been illustrated by a graph diagram: but this is immaterial. Every enthusiastic amateur will agree that those who merely press the button, and then take their films to the processing firm lose far more pleasure than they know. With such a book as this available, there is little excuse for succumbing to the joyless laziness of a too-mechanical age.

Why *Making Home Movies* should have been given this misleading title it is difficult to see, since the larger half of the book, and the most valuable (because rarely treated) is concerned not with making films, but with projecting them. No doubt there are many readers who will be surprised to discover that the art of simply showing films can be such a fascinating one. This book, again, is eminently practical. The author has had wide experience, and has constructed his own home theatre, the "Lyric," on professional lines, and with more-than-professional love. It is doubtful whether many readers will be willing, or able, to go as far as Mr. Ottley: but only one who has gone so far is competent to give the assistance and advice in this book. The contents concern broadly the choice of apparatus (cameras, projectors and accessories), the scope of sub-standard film, shooting a film, editing, trick cinematography for amateurs, make-up, the amateur cine society, arranging the home-programme, the arranging and playing of musical accompaniments, constructing the home cinema, running a performance, the talking picture in the home (sound-on-film and -disc) and hints on the fitting up of the amateur workshop.

It is possible to make a number of criticisms of Mr. Ottley's book which would not apply to Mr. Harris's. He has some annoying stylisms, such as to say that an article "retails at 6d" instead of "costs 6d." Towards the end, too, there seem to have been some lapses in proof-reading (for example, pages 270 and 271). More pertinently, perhaps, the passion for practical detail (normally praiseworthy) seems to have been carried a little too far in one or two places: it is unlikely that anyone competent to start building his own theatre will need advice on buying such simple tools as hammer and saw. None of these things, however, can minimise the value of the book as a whole. There must be many people who could ill afford to make a hobby of taking their own films, and yet who have projectors and occasionally run home-shows of hired films. For them (or even for a teacher who wants to fit up a room in school specially for film displays) this little book will give a host of invaluable suggestions.

E.H.L.

WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

WORK OF THE QUARTER

Education Panel

The Education Panel held its second meeting on February 22nd. Professor Winifred Cullis took the Chair and some 35 members were present. The Chairmen of the subject committees appointed at its first meeting gave reports on progress.

Professor Cullis, reporting as Acting Chairman of the Science Committee explained that their work had fallen under three main headings:—the examination of films already made which had an application to science; the examination and re-editing of films for strictly educational purposes; and consideration of suggestions for the production of new films.

Sir Charles Petrie as Chairman of the History and Art Committee said that a number of films had been viewed, but few had been found to be even moderately satisfactory. Beyond one or two that could be tentatively recommended for background purposes, nothing had been seen that could be wholly recommended for history teaching purposes. The main work in hand was the compilation of a Report on the History Teaching Film, which was intended to give producers an idea of what was meant by the history teaching film, in addition to encouraging the background film which could be utilised both in the schoolroom and the public cinema.

Mr. F. A. Ring reported on the work of the Geography Committee, and stated that a report was being prepared on the use of films for geography teaching. Preliminary headings had been arranged, and a circular letter of enquiry had been sent out to teachers of geography who had had experience in the use of the film, so that the Committee might have guidance in the compilation of the report.

During the meeting, mention was made of the film which was being undertaken by the National Union of Teachers on the educational system in this country, and Mr. Ring thanked the British Film Institute on behalf of the Union for the assistance and advice given.

Opportunity was also taken to discuss the present problems of the film in education. The General Manager referred to the schemes under consideration by the Governors for increasing the use of films in schools and for establishing a National Film Library which would facilitate the supply of educational films. Discussion also took place on the production of educational films which was at present carried out on an uneconomic basis. In order to remedy this position it was important to extend the market, and in this connection it was emphasised that one of the most useful pieces of work being done by the British Film Institute was the stimulation of interest among education authorities.

Dominions, India and Colonies Panel

In order to collect information on films taken by amateurs overseas, an enquiry is being addressed to officials and others in overseas parts of the Empire, and to persons who may have taken films while travelling in the dominions and colonies. If it appears from the particulars given that any of these films might be of educational and cultural value, endeavours will be made for copies to be procured for the Panel to view.

A suggestion put forward by the Colony of Southern Rhodesia that an "ad hoc" committee should be formed, is being considered by the Dominions and Colonies Panel. It is thought that such a committee could constitute a channel of communication with the British Film Institute, forward information in regard to films at present being used in the Colony, and undertake such experiments as might seem expedient.

The Panel is in touch with the Film Appraisal Committee of Madras, and the suggestion has been received that a Film Institute for India should be established.

Scientific Research Panel

The Scientific Research Panel is proposing to investigate the psychological effect on audiences of certain types of films. In order to set the enquiry on foot the co-operation of the branches of the Institute and of the National Council of Women is being invited.

Medical Panel

The Medical Panel has now decided to collect information on medical films in the Colonies. For this purpose an appropriate enquiry form has been drawn up. The British enquiry has been completed, and the classified catalogue will shortly be available. As soon as it is printed and circulated it is likely that other films will be brought to the notice of the Panel, and supplements will be issued from time to time. The catalogue has been arranged according to the medical curriculum as follows:—

- I. Pre-Clinical Sciences

(a) Biology.	(d) Anatomy
(b) Chemistry	(e) Physiology
(c) Physics	(f) Pharmacology
- II. General Medicine
- III. General Surgery
- IV. Forensic Medicine
- V. Hygiene and Public Health
- VI. Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- VII. Pathology

(a) Bacteriology	(b) Morbid Anatomy and Histology
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- VIII. Special Subjects

(a) Anaesthetics	(c) Dermatology
(b) Bio-Chemistry	(d) Dietetics

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| (e) Ear, Nose and Throat | (k) Orthopaedics |
| (f) Infectious Diseases | (l) Paediatrics |
| (g) Leprosy | (m) Proctology |
| (h) Mental Diseases and Psychology | (n) Tropical Diseases |
| (i) Neurology | (o) Tuberculosis |
| (j) Ophthalmology | (p) Urology |
| | (q) Venereal Diseases |

IX. Miscellaneous

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| (a) Balnaeology | (f) Massage and Remedial |
| (b) Dentistry | (g) Nursing [Gymnastics] |
| (c) Electro-Therapy | (h) Radiology |
| (d) First Aid | (i) Radio-Therapy (i) X-Ray |
| (e) Hospital Management and Education | (ii) Radium (iii) Ultra Violet Ray (iv) Heat |
| | (j) Veterinary |

International Committee on Television

At a meeting of the International Institute of Educational Cinematography at Rome in February last, one of the principal matters discussed was the formation of an International Committee to consider the relationship between films, broadcasting and television. The Rome Institute decided to proceed in this matter, and the first meeting of the newly established committee was held at Nice on April 5th. Mr. T. Baird and Mr. J. W. Brown (General Manager, B.F.I.) have been asked to serve.

National Library and Repository

Negotiations are still proceeding with reference to the establishment of a National Library and Repository. In the meantime a number of offers of films have been made to the Institute and gratefully accepted.

Questionnaire to Schools

3,500 copies of a questionnaire to schools are shortly to be circulated, asking for information as to the use being made of the film for educational purposes.

World Conference at Oxford

A world conference of educational associations is being held at Oxford from August 10th to 17th, and three international bodies are co-operating in its organisation—the World Federation of Educational Associations, the International Federation of Teaching Associations, and the International Federation of Associations of Secondary Teachers. The British Film Institute is arranging the VISUAL SECTION of the Conference, and the following are the subjects which will be discussed in the three sessions allocated to this section:

- I. (a) General arguments for the use of films for educational purposes.
- (b) Films and international understanding.
- II. (a) Existing supply of educational films.
- (b) New developments in educational films
- III (a) Use of films in adult educational institutes and societies.
- (b) The film in national life.

The Marchese Paulucci di Calboli Barone will be President of the Conference, and it is expected that Dr. L. de Feo, Director of the International Institute of Cinematography will also be present.

Summer Schools

Particulars of the Scarborough Film School to be held from August 5th to 10th are given on page 45 together with details of a *scholarship* which is being offered to readers of SIGHT AND SOUND.

A Summer School is being arranged at Loughborough College, Loughborough, Leicestershire, during which a series of special lectures and demonstrations will be given under the auspices of the British Film Institute, from August 12th to 17th. The lectures include: "Silent or Sound Films in Teaching?" by F. A. Hoare, Educational Consultant, Western Electric Co.; "Producing an Educational Film," by Will Day, F.R.P.S., F.R.S.A.; "Principles and Practice of Cinematography," by P. W. Harris, Editor, *Educational Film Review*; "The Teacher and Instructional Films," by Miss M. Locket, Director of G-B Instructional Films Bureau.

The Inaugural Address will be given by Sir Charles Cleland, K.B.E.

NEWS FROM BRANCHES AND SOCIETIES

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT F.I. BRANCH, Hon. Sec: Mrs. E. J. Hutchins, Cowichan, Withdean Crescent, Brighton.

In order to ventilate members' ideas and opinions, a meeting was held in February, at which the Chairman gave an account of the recent work of the British Film Institute at Headquarters; this was followed by an informal discussion on such matters as the censorship of films, the Monthly Bulletin of Films and the development of educational films.

A meeting has been arranged for March at which an address is being given on "The Use of the Cinema in a Modern School."

CHICHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Sec: G. A. Wilkins, 57, Orchard Avenue, Chichester, Sussex.

In February last Mr. W. Farr, of the British Film Institute, was the principal speaker at a representative meeting held in Chichester. The Very Reverend the Dean of Chichester presided and was supported by Miss R. Matson, M.A., Mrs. Courtauld (of Burton Park, Petworth), Captain S. D. Spicer, R.N. and Mr. G. A. Wilkins (Headmaster, Central C.E. Boys' School).

It was resolved on the proposition of the Dean to seek permission from the Governors of the British Film Institute to establish a branch in Chichester. Mrs. Courtauld was unanimously elected as its first President, while Mr. G. A. Wilkins was elected Hon. Secretary and Captain S. D. Spicer, Hon. Treasurer.

In addition to the members already enrolled, about 40 associate members have joined.

LEEDS FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Acting Sec: S. A. Crawford, 3, Hares Mount, Shepherds Lane, Leeds, 8.

The activities of the Leeds Film Institute Society have been recently directed towards endeavouring to obtain permission to give private Sunday film performances to members in a cinema in the City. Efforts in this direction have, so far, proved unsuccessful and some other method of presenting special films to the Society will have to be evolved.

In conjunction with Miss Milne of the Leeds Girls' High School, a programme of educational films was arranged for secondary school children at a local cinema and the show was a great success.

The secretaries of the Society have been working on a comprehensive index of information connected with the history and technique of the cinema.

Associate membership fee of the Society is 2s. 6d. per annum for which the member receives the monthly bulletin of recommended films which are to be generally released in the City.

LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Secs: Miss O. Vaughan, Brandis House, 92, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C.4., and R. M. Findlay, 13, Crescent Mansions, Elgin Crescent, London, W.11.

The formation of the Society was publicly announced on the evening of February 28th, when several hundred circulars, film guides and press notices were dispatched throughout London. By the end of March membership had reached the first hundred and applications are coming in steadily. The first public meeting of the Society was held on March 14th at the Victoria Mansions Restaurant, with Mr. Clow Ford in the chair. Mr. R. S. Lambert and Mr. J. W. Brown outlined the work of the Institute and the ways in which branches of the Institute could assist in that work. Miss M. Locket (G-B. Instructional) and Mr. F. A. Hoare (Western Electric) spoke on educational films. Miss Anna Lee welcomed the Society from the point of view of a film actress and Mr. R. Stevenson, her husband, speaking as one concerned in the production of entertainment films, made some extremely apposite remarks on higher film criticism. On March 28th a demonstration of colour processes was held at the Western Electric Theatre, Bush House. By courtesy of the companies concerned examples were shown of Dufaycolor, Gasparcolor and Spectracolour. Explanations of the processes were given by representatives from the companies and a short discussion followed.

The first number of the Society's Monthly Film Guide, which will be published on the first of each month and circulated to members, was issued on March 1st. It contained notices of the Society's meetings, a list of films worth seeing which were released during March, programmes of the repertory and specialist cinemas and of the film societies in London, a list of documentary and general interest films shown during March and the dates of lectures organised by various societies and clubs.

Anyone may join the Society as an Associate Member for 2s. 6d. a year or as a Full Member (receiving all publications issued by the Institute to its members) for £1. 1. 0 a year. All existing members of the Institute living or working in London may join the Society without any further subscription if they will write to the Hon. Secretaries asking to be registered as members.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Sec: J. N. Bamforth, 9, Chestnut Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

The Society held its first public meeting on Friday, March 8th, in the Lecture Theatre of the Central Library, when Mr. Hugh Grey, Head of the Gaumont-British Research Department, gave a very interesting lecture on "The Place of Accuracy in Entertainment Films." Mr. W. T. Stevenson, Chief Inspector of Schools for Manchester and Chairman of the Branch, took the Chair, and outlined the programme of the Branch.

The next meeting is being held on Monday, April 8th, when Mr. Frederick Watts, Editor of Pathe-Pictorial, is giving a lecture on "The Making of a Newsreel," a film of the methods of making newsreels, which has never been shown previously outside London, will be exhibited during the evening.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: 5 & 6, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1.

The Society continues to increase both in size and influence, and it is endeavouring to maintain this two-fold extension of its activities. Such measures as the formation of a sub-standard film group, and preliminary arrangements for the making of films by members during the coming summer will, it is hoped, be of assistance in this aim.

The chief event of last quarter was the special film show given by the Society at the Prince of Wales Theatre, when, by special permission of the magistrates, *Poil de Carotte* was shown, together with *Oil Symphony* and a Hungarian cartoon by Zuts.

By courtesy of the management of the Prince of Wales Theatre, a Club Night was held for the first performance of *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*, and the Society has to thank G. B. Instructional Ltd., for an excellent exhibition

of educational sound films which was given in the Concert Hall of the Bluecoat Chambers.

Dr. Dorothy Knowles, who is a member of the Society and the author of *The Censor, the Drama and the Film*, 1900-1934, gave an interesting lecture on "Censorship," and Mr. C. J. Graham who was acting for the films in America over twenty years ago, has given the Society an entertaining account of his experiences.

NORTHERN IRELAND F.I. BRANCH, Hon. Sec: Sydney P. Whitehouse, 86, Balmoral Avenue, Belfast.

Much spade work had to be done before the branch could make its presence felt and issue its first monthly bulletin last December, and this work is now beginning to bear fruit. From many reliable quarters comes the information that the monthly bulletin is much appreciated, and it is intended to continue this important work, though at the moment the financial side of publication is causing not a little anxiety.

A good opportunity for propaganda arose a few weeks ago when the local branch received an invitation to put its aims and ideals before a film audience in the Belfast Art Gallery in a ten minutes' talk before the performance. The Hon. Secretary was instructed to be in attendance and give the talk. After the performance literature and membership forms were distributed.

SALFORD FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Organising Sec: Dr. J. Bradley, 8, Acton Square, Salford, Manchester.

The Salford Branch of the British Film Institute organised and carried through four demonstrations of educational films on January 17th, 18th and 19th, at which over 1,000 teachers attended. Miss Locket of G-B. Instructional personally directed.

Subsequently these teachers were circularised and informed of the aims and objects of the British Film Institute and invited to become members.

On March 22nd a further demonstration was given showing equipment and films suitable for the class room. About forty teachers were present.

SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL, Interim Hon. Sec: C. A. Oakley, 188, Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2.

Mr. John Buchan, a Governor of the Institute, has accepted the Chairmanship of the Scottish Film Council of the Institute, and, Dr. James Low having been appointed Vice Chairman, the membership of the Council is now complete. A campaign to establish branches of the Institute in various parts of Scotland has just been launched, and good progress has already been made in Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, and the Eastern Borders. The Entertainment, Education and Social Service Panels of the Council are being very active. The Entertainment Panel drew up a list of twenty commercially-exhibited films which, in spite of the high praise they had received, were thought to have had rather mixed receptions from some members of the Scottish public. The films in the list were *The Battle, Berkeley Square, Catherine the Great, Design for Living, Dinner at Eight, Friday the 13th, I am Suzanne, The Invisible Man, Lady for a Day, Man of Aran, Morning Glory, Night Flight, Only Yesterday, Private Life of Henry VIII, Queen Christina, Red Wagon, The Thin Man, Three Corners Moon, Twentieth Century, The Unfinished Symphony*. The list was printed in evening newspapers in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and the public was invited to vote for the six films which it had found most satisfactory. *The Thin Man* and *The Private Life of Henry VIII* take first place on the list, and the second and third positions are occupied by *Man of Aran* and *Dinner at Eight*, respectively.

The Social Service Panel is preparing a Report for the guidance of social organisations on the use of sub-standard films in clubs and other centres. The Educational Panel has appointed a sub-committee to select educational films for children's Saturday morning matinees to be arranged in many parts of Scotland next winter. The Panel is supporting the Scottish Educational Cinema Society in the Exhibition of Screen Aids to Education in the MacLellan

Galleries, Glasgow, on the 12th and 13th April. Fuller reference is made to this Exhibition on page 34.

The negotiations between the Scottish Educational Cinema Society and the Scottish Sight and Sound Society will shortly be completed, and the formation of the Scottish Educational Film Association will then be announced. The three Scottish Film Societies—Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen—have just finished their seasons. They have been very successful and, in the cases of Glasgow and Aberdeen, the membership lists had to be closed. A determined effort is being made during the summer months to re-form the Dundee Film Society which, perhaps because of being created before its time, was disbanded in 1930. The Scottish Film Council has appointed jointly with the Scottish National Development Council a small sub-committee to supervise the production of a film for the Scottish Special (Depressed) Area Commission.

BRANCHES ARE ALSO BEING FORMED FOR THE FOLLOWING DISTRICTS:—

HUDDERSFIELD: Hon. Sec: S. W. Bonarjee, 72, New North Road, Huddersfield.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE: Acting Sec: E. J. Wheldon, Glenarm, Nr. Stone, Staffs.

NORTHAMPTON: Hon. Sec: C. H. Smith, 131, Wellingborough Road, Northampton.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secretary: Mrs. R. C. Knight, 21, Carpenter Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 15.

The increase in membership this season has made it possible to hold an extra meeting on May 12th.

The films shown at meetings include:—*December 9th*, Liebele, (Ophüls), *The Country Comes to Town* (Basil Wright), *I've Never Seen a Smile Like Yours* (Fischinger) *The Pacific* (Atlantic Diagrammatic Film, Zenifilms). *January 13th*: *The Changing Year* (Mary Field), *King Neptune* (Disney), *Quick Millions* (Rowland Brown). *February 10th*: *Weather Forecast* (G.P.O.), *The Oil Symphony* (Pumpiansky), *Poil de Carotte* (Duvivier). *March 10th*: *Song of the Ski* (Frisk), *Night on the Bare Mountain* (Parker and Alexeieff), *Charlemagne*.

CHILDREN'S FILM SOCIETY, Sec: Miss C. Winifred Harley, 61, Southway, N.W.11.

The Children's Film Society, which has the Everyman Cinema Theatre as its headquarters, has just concluded an exceedingly successful first season. The Society is conducted on Film Society lines, members paying a subscription for the season. In addition to showing films the Society has arranged for some director or critic to address members at each performance, and tours of the projection suite have been made at the end of each meeting. Among those who have spoken during the season are Mary Field, Basil Wright, Paul Rotha, Arthur Elton and Stuart Legg.

FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW, Hon. Sec: D. Paterson Walker, 127, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

The following meetings have been held during the quarter: *December 16th*: *Marie and Pett and Pott*, and other shorts. *January 13th*: *Charlemagne* and *Upstream*. *February 3rd*: *Ces Messieurs de la Sante*, *Nachtliche Ruheströmung*, *All Quiet in the East*. *February 24th*: *Liebelei*, *The Idea* and *6.30 Collection*. *March 17th*: *Refugees*, *Le Million*, *Joie de Vivre*.

A plebiscite of the Society's members on the two best films shown by the Society during the year 1934 resulted in a vote in favour of *La Maternelle* and *Ekstase*.

A lecture and discussion was held in the Gainsborough Halls on March 3rd when the Glasgow School of Art Kine Club exhibited the film with which they won the Saville Cup at the recent amateur festival in Glasgow.

FILM SOCIETY, LONDON, Secretary: Miss J. M. Harvey, 56, Manchester Street, London, W.1.

The following films are amongst those which have been shown by the Film Society at its performances on January 13th, February 10th and March 10th:—*Great Britain*: *How Talkies Talk* (G.B.I.), *Workers and Jobs* (Arthur

Elton). *U.S.A.*: *Rhapsody in Steel* (Ford Motor Co.). *Germany*: *Das Gestohlene Herz*, a Silhouette film by Lotte Reiniger. *Austria*: *Nachtliche Ruheströmung* (Max Brand). *Poland*: *Sabra* (Alex. Ford). *France*: *Ave Maria* (Dimitri Roschanski and Alexander Alexander). *U.S.S.R.*: *Chapaev* (The Brothers Vasiliev). *Holland*: *Dood Wasser* (Gerard Rutten).

HAMPSTEAD FILM SOCIETY, Secretary: J. S. Fairfax-Jones, Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead, N.W.3.

Films shown at meetings of the Society during the early part of the season include *Pred Maturitou*, *Pett and Pott*, *Warning Shadows*, *B.B.C. Droitwich*, *What the News-reel Shows and Blow*, *Bugles*, *Blow*.

Among those on the Council are C. E. M. Joad, Clough Williams-Ellis, Paul Rotha, Maxwell Ayrton and Lawrence Hanray.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

Among the films shown at Society meetings since the last issue of *SIGHT AND SOUND* are *The Oil Symphony* (U.S.S.R.), *All Quiet in the East*, *A Trip to Davy Jones' Locker* (Pathecolour 1910), *Rapt*, *Un Monastere*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, *B.B.C. Droitwich*, *Anna und Elisabeth*, *Joie de Vivre*.

For its meeting on April 13th the Society has arranged a special exhibition of coloured drawings and sketches by Mrs. Stella Burford dealing with work inside a British film studio.

Professor T. H. Pear is giving ten University Extension Lectures on Psychological Aspects of Film and Radio, and members of the Society are admitted free.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec: T. Cavenagh, 69, Liverpool Street, Salford, 5, Lancs.

At the 34th performance of the Society on March 16th the following films were shown: *Vienna the Wonderful* (U.S.A. 1933), *The Amoeba*, *Contact* (Rotha) and *Zero de Conduite* (Jean Vigo). Following the performance a discussion took place at Duncan and Foster's Cafe.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY, Sec: H. A. Green, 6, Carysfort Road, Stoke Newington, N.16.

The North London Film Society has continued its season of Sunday films at the Plaza Cinema, Dalston, E.8. with: *February 3rd*: *Crossing the Great Sagrada* (Brunel), *Lot in Sodom*, *The Living Corpse* (Ozep-Pudovkin). *March 3rd*: *Hot Dogs* (Chaplin), *Symphony of the Streets*, *Dawn to Dawn* (Macpherson-Berne), *The Virtuous Isidore* (Deschamps). *March 31st*: *Sea Change* (Shaw), *Sheltered Waters* (Evelyn Spice), *Rain* and *Men and Jobs* (Macheret).

The following lectures have also been given: *February 9th*, "Amateur Cameracraft" by H. A. Green. *March 9th*, "Sound" by E. N. Daines, and *April 6th*: "Some Aspects of the Sound Film" by E. H. Lindgren.

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY, General Secretary: O. A. Minns, 4, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Some idea of the extent of the interest aroused by the religious film movement is indicated by the fact that during last Autumn the Secretary visited and demonstrated in towns as far apart as Reading, Broadstairs, Cardiff, Salisbury, Liverpool, Dover, Swansea, Margate and Derby, not to speak of many other occasions in the Home Counties and Metropolitan area; and that since the Religious Film Society was formed (late in 1933) considerably over a million feet of film have been exhibited under its auspices, in more than three hundred churches, Sunday Schools, Temperance Societies and similar organisations.

The Society provides advice and information on apparatus, and on suitable programmes for film services to be held in churches, school halls, or local cinemas. *Mastership*, the Society's first talking picture is being exhibited through the Western Electric Road-Show Service, and its second picture *Inasmuch*, which was presented for the first time at the Annual Meeting of the Guilds of Light on March 5th, is now available for booking in standard and 16 mm. editions.

SOUTHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Gen. Sec : J. S. Fairfax-Jones, The Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead, London, N.W.3. Hon. Southampton Secretaries : D. A. Yeoman, J. M. Cameron, 21, Ethelbert-avenue, Bassett Green, Southampton. Hon. Winchester Secretaries : Ruth Keyser, C. J. Blackburne, 12, St. Swithun Street, Winchester. Hon. Student Secretaries : Miss K. Donnelly, J. V. Russell, University College, Southampton.

The Southampton Film Society, now in its fourth season, has secured a record membership. A branch organisation has been formed at Winchester, resulting in a large addition to the membership. Among the films shown this season have been *Turksib*, *Poil de Carotte*, *La Crise est Finie*, *The Crazy Ray*, *Morgenrot*, *Sous les Toits de Paris*, *Joie de Vivre* and *What the News-reel Shows*.

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secretary : c/o The Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.

Owing to a large increase in membership, it has been possible for the Society to arrange four Sunday exhibitions during the Spring Session, at which the following films are being shown :—*Reka* (Young Love), *Pett and Pott*, *Minuet by Mozart* (Fischinger), *Poil de Carotte*, *Pacific 231*, *Crazy Ray*, *Thunder Over Mexico*, *Ballet of Aida* (Fischinger), *Granton Trawler*, *Night on the Bare Mountain*, *Ces*

Messieurs de la Sante, *Weather Forecast*, *Gasparcolor Films*, *Joie de Vivre*.

The programme also includes the exhibition of sub-standard versions of the *White Hell of Pitz Palu* and *Storm Over Asia*. Another successful Children's Exhibition, arranged in conjunction with the Modern Language Association, was held on March 2nd, and the programme consisted of *Pecheur d'Islande*, *Three Little Pigs* (French Version), *King's English* and *Dutch Cheese* (Gaumont British miniature).

MONTAGU AMATEUR PICTURES, 8, Montagu Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Since a very successful initial Public Show held in Newcastle in November last, there have been large bookings in the district for the films shown on that programme and all energies have been concentrated on giving these various shows.

A colour cartoon is just being commenced and in the last two months the producers, Messrs. Wearmouth and Dodds, have settled on certain themes for films to be made this year.

Mr. Ernest F. Dyer, the Chairman of the Tyneside Film Society, is joining this unit with the object of producing a propaganda film.

FILMS FOR AFRICA

AN IMPORTANT EXPERIMENT

AN important piece of research in the field of adult education is being undertaken by the Department of Social and Industrial Research of the International Missionary Council. It is an experiment to discover the possibilities of the film as a civilizing and educational agent among primitive Africans, and has been made possible by a grant of £11,000 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The first task is to help the African community to an intelligent adjustment to modern life. New methods of sanitation, disease prevention, ways of preparing food, of baby care, agriculture and the meaning of the Western code of laws and morals must all be interpreted to the Bantu in terms he can understand. This will be done by using African actors, scenes and backgrounds, and by relating the new regime to the old in an intelligible sequence.

A film producing unit is being equipped and is to sail for East Africa in May. The experiment which is planned to take two years is to be carried out under the general direction of Mr. J. Merle Davis, Director of the Industrial and Social Research Department, Major Notcutt, who has already carried out similar experiments on a small scale, and Mr. G. C. Lat-ham, a former Director of Education in N. Rhodesia. Headquarters in Tanganyika Territory have been chosen as an ideal production centre, and it is hoped in about three months to have completed a two hour programme of short entertainment and instructional films. The people are mostly illiterate and unable to read captions, and the films will therefore be made with a commentary in several languages. The films will then be shown in selected areas in Tanganyika, Kenya, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and the preferences and criticisms of the audiences will be studied and recorded, and made a basis for the production of subsequent

programmes. The experiment may be the first step towards a permanent undertaking for producing a supply of wholesome films not only for Mission and Government use, but also for the circuits of native cinemas which will eventually be established throughout Bantu Africa.

The scheme is being organised and directed in London, with the help of the Colonial Office and with the co-operation of the British Film Institute. The Institute has formed the following Advisory Council whose members represent the chief groups in England having an interest in the advancement and well-being of the Bantu :—

Chairman : The Rt. Hon. Lord Lugard, P.C.
 T. H. Baxter (Secretary, Missionary Film Committee).
 Rev. A. M. Chirgwin (General Secretary, London Missionary Society).
 Dr. J. H. Oldham (International Institute of African Languages.)
 John Smith (African cultural interests).
 Miss Audrey Richards (London School of Economics, Department of Anthropology).
 G. T. Hankin (H.M.I. Special experience in Africa with the film).
 Miss M. Lockett (Director of G.B. Instructional Films Bureau).
 Professor F. Clarke (Institute of Education).
 Major G. St. Orde Brown (African Society; Royal Empire Society).
 Lt.-Col. G. S. Parkinson (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine).
 Dr. W. B. Mumford (Institute of Education).
 Miss Margaret Wrong (African literary interests).
 Professor J. L. Myres (Anthropological interests).
 J. Fairgrieve (Institute of Education; Royal Geographical Association).
 Dr. T. Drummond Shiels (British Social Hygiene Council; Chairman, Dominions, India and Colonies Panel of the B.F.I.).
 R. Vernon (Colonial Office).
 Z. F. Willis (Adult education).
 Dr. C. G. Seligman.
 Rev. Canon Ernest Spanton (Universities Mission to Central Africa).

TECHNICAL AND TRADE REVIEWS

DR. CANTI'S PHOTOMICROGRAPH
CINEMA INSTALLATION

AT ST. BARTHOLEMEW'S HOSPITAL

By H. D. Waley

This article is the first of a series which will describe instruments designed for special work in various fields.

DR. CANTI'S films depicting normal and morbid cell-development have been received with world-wide interest. It is the object of this article to describe briefly the apparatus used in taking these films. I have to acknowledge Dr. Canti's kindness in giving me permission to inspect his apparatus and in furnishing me with the photographs here reproduced and the technical particulars on which this article is based. I have also to thank for assistance and suggestions Dr. John Bland, the pathological expert in charge of the apparatus.

In essence the apparatus consists of six parts:—

- (1) The supporting base and framework.
- (2) The incubator, which keeps the cell-cultures warm.
- (3) The microscope, which here supplants the camera lens.
- (4) The camera, with its spool boxes.
- (5) The artificial light by means of which the photos are taken.
- (6) The apparatus which runs the camera and turns the light on.

Supporting Base and Framework

If we glance at Fig 1 the massive structure of the base and framework catch the eye at once. The leggy tripod of the field camera and the elegant chromium-tube trolley of the studio camera have been superseded here by slabs of concrete which might be credited with supporting a sky-scraper. The lozenge-shaped concrete slabs are separated by layers of 'sorbo' rubber which show as dark stripes in the photograph. The weight of each concrete slab resists vibration by its inertia and the layers of rubber minimise by 'damping' the transmission from slab to slab of such vibration as does occur. You cannot, of course, magnify the object you are photographing without magnifying to the same extent the errors introduced into photography by unsteadiness. On the two concrete-and-rubber piles rests a slate slab supporting in its turn a huge bridge-like metal casting which occupies a prominent position in both photographs. The whole length of this casting is occupied by the wood-and-glass box which performs the function of keeping the cultures at a steady temperature.

The Microscope

The microscope is by Messrs. Beck, who were also responsible for many of the most ingenious

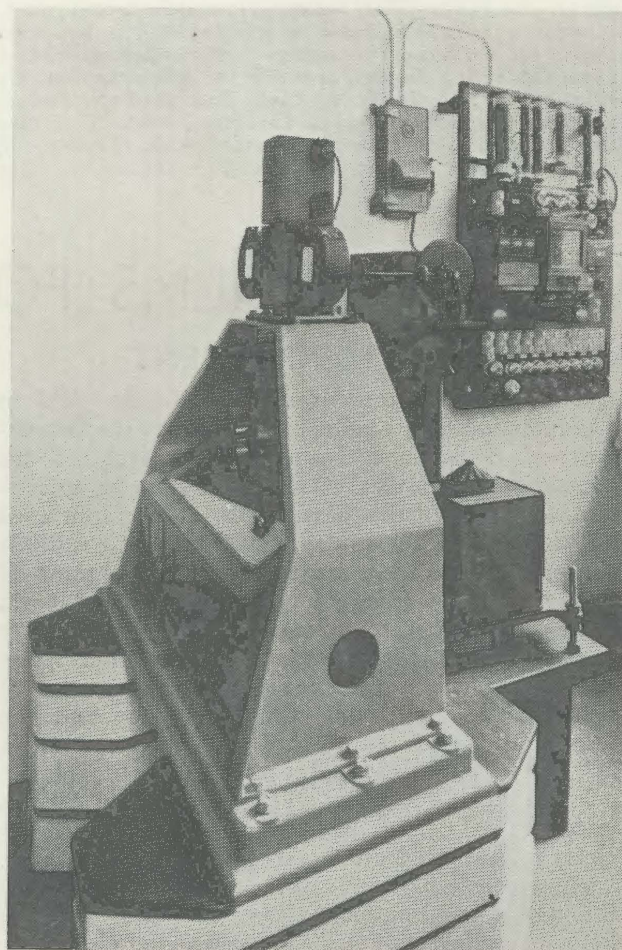


Fig. 1. Side-view of Dr. Canti's apparatus

features of the apparatus. The largest magnification so far attained has been 837 diameters. Normally a magnification of about 400 diameters is employed. In order to obtain this a 3mm. 'apochromatic' objective is employed with a Leitz No. 2 or No. 4 'periplanatic' eyepiece. The height of the film above the microscope tube is about 50cm.

The bellows seen in Fig. 2 in the top compartment of the casting joins the microscope to the camera and carries the two viewing telescopes used for focussing. These two telescopes are visible in Fig. 1. The top one gives an enlarged view of the image on the film while the bottom one functions as an ordinary microscope eyepiece. As a preliminary

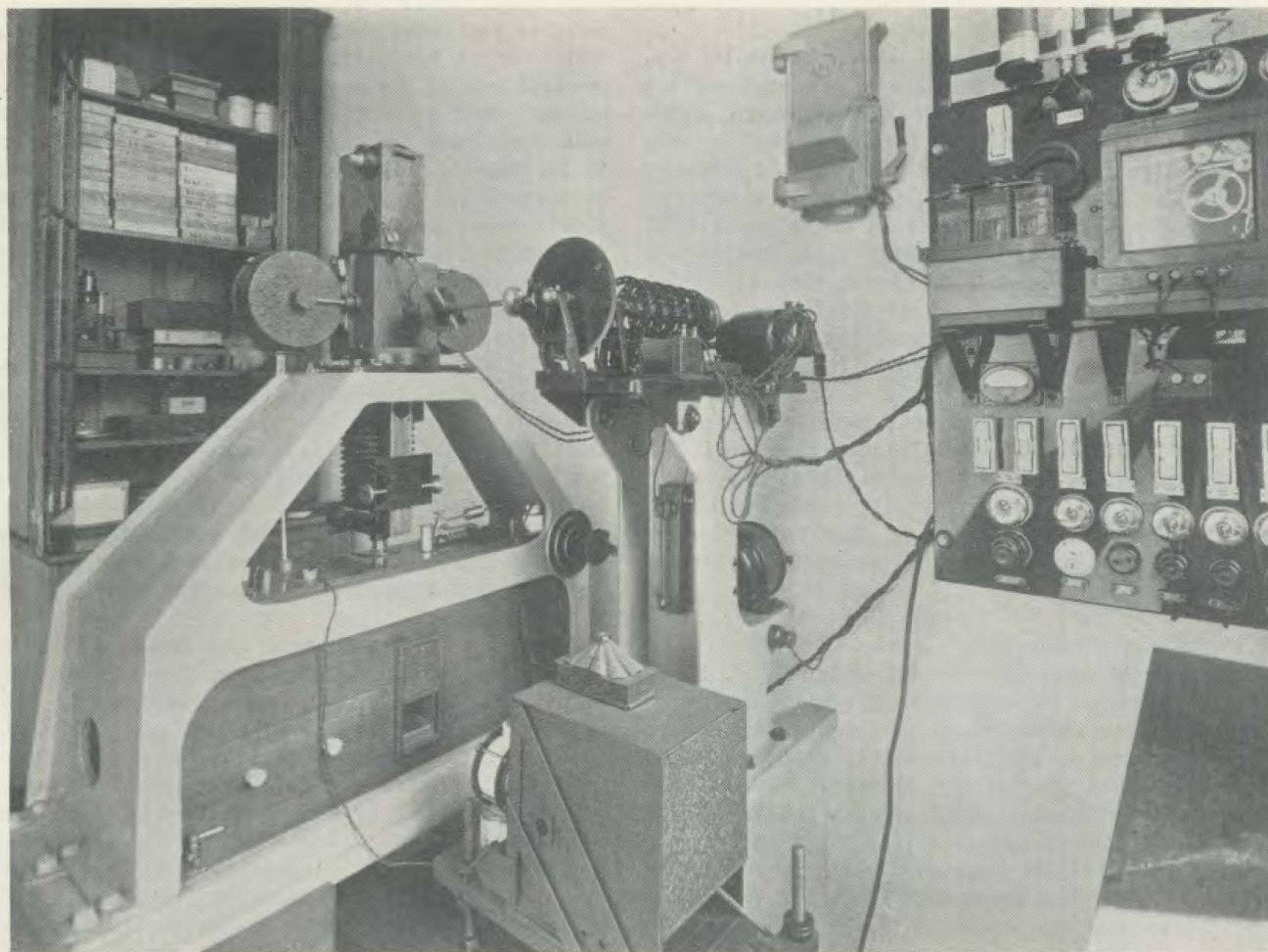


Fig. 2. Back-view of Dr. Canti's apparatus

the objective lens is set so that a clear image on the film is seen through the top telescope and the lower telescope is then set so that it also gives a clear image. The two telescopes having thus been brought into unison the top one can be stopped out and the correct focus of the objective lens maintained by observation through the lower telescope only. As the use of the lower telescope does not involve the admission of extraneous light this method avoids the fogging of a frame each time the focus is adjusted.

The Camera

The camera (which is by Messrs. Vinten) is perched on the roof of the casting. It can function in two ways—either running continuously or intermittently. For continuous running a worm-drive from the lower of the two motors seen in Fig 2 rotates the shaft of the three pulleys seen at the far end of the centre of the large casting. A belt on one of these carries the drive up to pulleys which can be fixed on to the camera shaft instead of the dog and cross-bar device seen in the photo. By using different pulley combinations speeds varying from 16 pictures a second to 1 picture every two seconds can be obtained. Intermittent running is

controlled by a clockwork and mercury-switch mechanism which will be described in more detail later. When the intermittent mechanism is in use the rotating cinema-camera shutter is superseded by an ordinary spring-driven shutter such as is used in still cameras. This is placed between the light-source and the little window through which the light enters the incubator. Correct exposure is ensured by measuring the illumination with a photo-cell and galvanometer and controlling it with a set of grey filters of graded density. The exposure most frequently found suitable is one-fifth of a second. The type of film generally employed is Kodak Supersensitive Panchromatic Greyback.

It will be noticed that the camera appears to consist of two boxes. The top box contains a clock and a mirror. The mirror and an appropriate lens throw a reversed reflection of the clock on to the back of the film in the corner of the picture. Since the clock is photographed in reverse from the back of the film it appears in the picture right way round and indicates the exact time of each exposure as well as providing by the speed of its motion a clue to the amount of speed-magnification involved which is instinctively grasped by the audience when the film is projected.

Light-Source

The light-source employed is an Edison 100 c.p. 'Pointolite.' These lamps are of the enclosed arc type. They provide a very concentrated light-source as the incandescent tungsten ball is only 5mm. in diameter. In order to force their intensity up to the highest possible point they are overrun in this apparatus and function on a current of three amperes, which is more than twice their normal. In consequence, of course, they only enjoy a short life—the sum-total of the exposures they illuminate generally not much exceeding three-quarters of an hour. A high light-intensity is required because dark-ground illumination only sends into the microscope lens an extremely small fraction of the light-source's total emission. Its advantage for work of this kind is that it emphasises the structure of the cells by showing up the boundaries between substances possessing different refractive indices. The lamphouse appears in the centre of the foreground of Fig. 2.

Controlling Mechanism

In the top right-hand corner of both Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 appears a formidable switch-board connected by numerous leads both to the mercury-switch assembly seen on a pedestal in the centre of Fig. 2 and to various parts of the apparatus already described. The clock-mechanism on this switchboard controls, through the mercury-switch assembly, the motive power of the apparatus and brings about its automatic running at pre-determined periods. It can be set for intervals of $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{6}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, 1, $2\frac{1}{2}$, 5 or 15 minutes. The one-minute interval is that which is most frequently used. A revolution-counter records the number of exposures made.

The cycle of operations controlled by the clock-work is as follows: Projecting platinum points are spaced out on a cylinder which is rotated by the clockwork. When contact is made the current

actuates a solenoid which switches on a relay current which in its turn sets in motion the motor seen perched behind the mercury-switch assembly. The mercury-switch assembly consists of a row of rotatable discs each bearing a mercury-switch mounted at an appropriate angle. As the discs tilt, driven by a worm-gear from the motor the switches throw four circuits into action. One throws the extra $1\frac{1}{2}$ amperes into the Pointolite, which burns between exposures at its normal load, a second lights the little lamp which illuminates the clock-face, a third works the camera shutter, a fourth turns the film on, and finally a fifth cuts off again the current which has been actuating the whole switch-tilting process. In order to minimise the transmission of vibration from the motor to the camera contact between the two is reduced to a minimum, the drive being effected by a sort of universal joint consisting of a cross-bar and two dogs. An ingenious contrivance throws back the cross-bar slightly after each turn, so that during actual exposure the cross-bar and dogs are not in contact.

Apart from the mechanical and optical difficulties inherent in the design of this apparatus, the tendency of the cells to die from over-exposure to light has been a factor which has had to be reckoned with. At first it was hoped that filtering out the heat from the beam might overcome this difficulty, but experiments showed that light-radiation, not heat-radiation was doing the damage. Further experiments showed that short exposure to intense light was better tolerated by the cells than longer exposure to proportionately less intense light. It might, of course, be found possible to adjust the wave-lengths of radiations passed through filters to the sensitivity of the emulsion used in such a way that the radiations affected the emulsion without affecting the tissue-cultures, but this has not yet been investigated, as the present arrangements seem to meet the practical requirements of the case.

M. LOUIS LUMIÈRE'S SYSTEM OF STEREOSCOPY

On February 25th M. Louis Lumière demonstrated in Paris an improved system of stereoscopy. He has introduced certain refinements into the well-known method which consists in viewing superimposed red and green stereoscopic pairs through spectacles of which one lens consisted of green glass and the other of red.

Two main difficulties had hitherto been encountered, firstly, that of parallax error in superimposing two images from separate sources, and secondly, that of eye-fatigue. The first difficulty has been dealt with in M. Lumière's system by bringing together as near as is physically possible the two pictures which are to be projected in superimposition. They are placed one above the other in a single 'frame' of the film. In order to avoid the unduly flat proportions which would result from dividing a normal cinema picture horizontally the usual proportions of the total frame are reversed by the use of a special projector which passes the film from one side to the other instead of from top to bottom. In this way parallax, although, of course, not entirely banished, is minimised.

With regard to the second difficulty—that of eye-fatigue—M. Lumière came to the conclusion that it was largely due to the unequal stimulus which the eyes received from the colours previously selected—red and green. He accordingly set out to produce glasses better balanced in their distribution of activity between the eyes. His ultimate solution was to employ two shades approximating yellow and blue. The yellowish glass passes middle-spectrum rays from 550 to 640mmu., while the bluish glass passes rays from both ends of the spectrum, 400-550 mmu. at one end and 640-700mmu. at the other.

It is always agreeable to hear of any problem receiving a satisfactory scientific solution, but it is not to be expected that the exhibitors will welcome with open arms a process which requires a special projector and precludes the use of natural colour. I hear, however, that the Curzon is to offer Londoners an opportunity of viewing a demonstration.

H.D.W.

SCARBOROUGH FILM SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

SIGHT AND SOUND has pleasure in announcing particulars of a Scholarship which is open to all its readers. The Scholarship will provide for attendance at the Film School at Scarborough during the week August 5th to 10th, and board and accommodation for that period.

Readers who wish to enter for the Scholarship are invited to write a paper, not more than 1,000 words in length, on any aspect of present-day cinematography in which they are interested. The Scholarship will be awarded to the reader who, in the opinion of the Editorial Board, submits the paper of highest merit.

Papers (which must be typewritten) will be judged on general interest, suitability of treatment of subject matter, originality of ideas. They must be accompanied by the Form printed below and must be received at the editorial offices not later than Wednesday, June 12th, 1935.

The following is an outline of the programme of the

SCARBOROUGH FILM SCHOOL

Organised by the

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

in association with the

EDUCATIONAL HANDWORK ASSOCIATION

August 5th to 10th, 1935

Subject :

*Technique and Manipulation
Film Production*

The Use of the Film in School

*Mass Demonstrations and the Use
of Background Films*

Tutor :

H. D. Waley (Technical Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND).
Ronald Gow, B.Sc. (Producer of "The People of the Axe," "The Glittering Sword," "The River Dart.")

J. A. Lauwerys, B.Sc., A.I.C., (Lecturer in Methods of Science, University of London. Author of *Education and Biology*, etc.)
W. H. George, B.Sc., (William Rhodes Modern School, Chesterfield. Producer of "The Outer Isles," etc.)

G. D. Griffith, M.B.E., B.Sc. (Headmaster King Street L.C.C. School. Organiser of St. Pancras Experiment in Mass Demonstration.)

Also Lectures By:—

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
MARY FIELD
G. T. HANKIN, H.M.I.
F. HEMING VAUGHAN

Producer of "The Man Who Knew Too Much," "Blackmail," etc.
Producer of "Secrets of Nature" and "Secrets of Life" film series.

Chairman, Merseyside Film Institute Society.

EXHIBITIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND PRACTICAL WORK

Scholarship Entry Form

Scarborough Film School, August, 1935

To SIGHT AND SOUND, c/o British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

I desire to enter for the Scarborough Film School Scholarship. Accordingly I submit herewith a paper entitled :

.....
for the consideration of the Editorial Board of SIGHT AND SOUND, and I agree to abide by their decision.

Name.....

Address.....
(Please use block capitals)

Date.....

Occupation :.....

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

4, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1. Telephone: Museum 0607-8

The British Film Institute exists "to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction." Its objects are:—

1. To act as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad, particularly as regards education and general culture.
2. To influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction.
3. To advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons on films and apparatus.
4. To link up the film trade and the cultural and educational interests of the country.
5. To encourage research into the various uses of the film.
6. To establish a national repository of films of permanent value.
7. To provide a descriptive and critical catalogue of films of educational and cultural value.
8. To advise Government Departments concerned with films.
9. To certify films as educational, cultural or scientific.
10. To undertake similar duties in relation to the Empire.

HOW TO OBTAIN MEMBERSHIP

The Institute being a Company limited by guarantee it is necessary for intending members to fill up the form of application which will be found below and forward it together with the appropriate subscription. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be forwarded for perusal if desired. Corporate Bodies can become members of the Institute by paying an annual subscription of not less than £5 5s. Such subscribers would entitle the affiliated organization to commensurate privilege of membership.

Members will be entitled to receive publications issued by the Institute, including (1) the official organ, SIGHT AND SOUND; (2) a monthly review of new films suitable for educational or instructional purposes and entertainment films of unusual merit; (3) an annual report on the year's work and (4) informative leaflets on technical and other matters.

Copies of SIGHT AND SOUND are available to non-members at the price of 6d. per copy (7½d. including postage) and a separate subscription form will be found on page i.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the Governors of the British Film Institute,

I hereby make application to be admitted to membership of the British Film Institute and agree, if elected, to observe the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Rules and Regulations of the Institute for the time being in force.

I enclose herewith the sum of £1 1s. 0d. (or 10/6, if after December 31st) and will pay annually on July 1st the yearly subscription of £1 1s. 0d.

I further undertake, if elected, to contribute to the assets of the Institute in the event of its being wound up while I am a Member or within one year after I cease to be a Member, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the Institute contracted before I cease to be a Member, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves such amount as may be required, not exceeding one pound.

Usual Signature.....

Full Name.....
(Title, Mr., Mrs., or Miss)

Address

Profession or Occupation.....

EVOLUTION OF CINEMATOGRAPHY

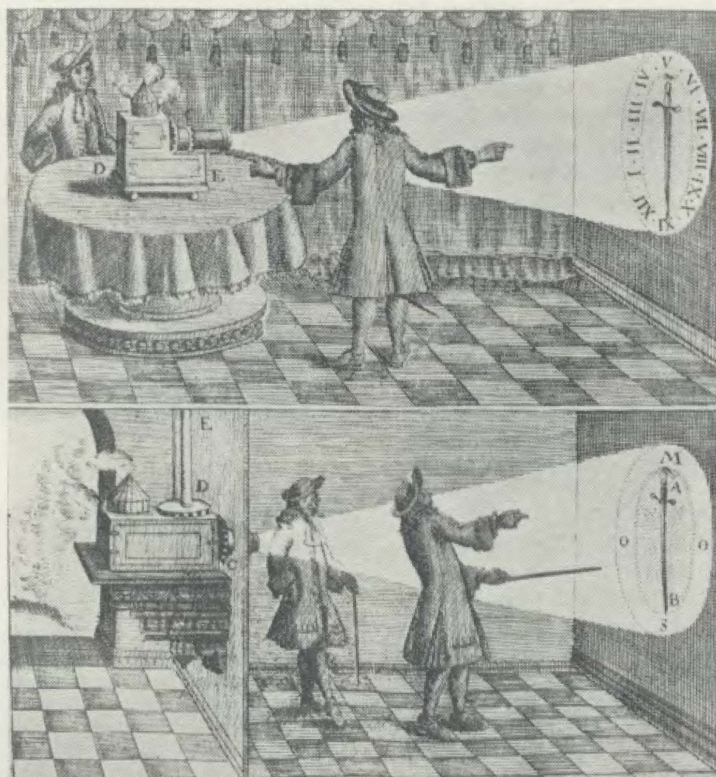
With special reference to the collection of historical apparatus in the
Science Museum at South Kensington

No. 1. PRECURSORS OF THE CINEMA

NO attempt will be made in this article to answer the question: "Who invented the Cinema?" Our aim will be to examine the problems of apparatus design from an evolutionary standpoint. We shall see the age of optical-illusion toys with curious names fading into the age of the Mutoscope peep-show, a brief epoch rapidly succeeded by the Film Picture Palace period in which we are now living—the Mammalian epoch, as it were, of cinematography.

Optical Toy Age

The museum has a very fine collection of optical-illusion toys. They are in the wall-case on our right hand as we come from the main lift or stairs. At first glance they all look much alike and this fact, coupled with the formidable titles ending in '-scope' and '-trope' which their sponsors showered on them may rather intimidate the visitor. His starting point should be Newton's colour-wheel, the 'thaumatrope' of 1826 and Faraday's wheel of 1831. These three show persistence of vision producing a stationary image out of a plurality of moving ones. Any rushing of shapes past the eye so speedy that they blend into a streak exemplifies the same principle. The trouble in such cases is, of course, not that the eye hasn't enough opportunity of seeing each shape, but that it has too much opportunity of seeing it in too many different positions. One remedy which paves the way for producing the more complicated 'moving picture' illusion is to screen off continuous observation and substitute a series of glimpses each so brief that it only allows time for a negligible amount of movement. The 'scopes' and 'tropes' of the optical toy age all accomplished this by a rotating screen pierced with peepholes and this reduction of the period of visibility of each image to a bare minimum



Early Magic Lantern from Zahn's *Oculus Artificialis*, 1702
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Science Museum)

is the essential feature of their design. It is not necessary to understand the individual peculiarities of each in order to appreciate the position in cinematographic design of the whole group. In all the early types (i.e., before 1890) the images are borne on a rigid disc or hoop of limited size and therefore the subject repeats itself every few seconds. Nevertheless, Muybridge (1830-1904) made use of what he christened a 'Zoopraxiscope' for synthesis of movement in some of his animal-motion studies, and one of his original glass plates for the instrument can be seen—among other interesting Muybridge

relics—in a floor-case near the centre of the gallery. In fact, the slotted peephole principle survives to this day in certain types of film-inspection machine used for editing, which comprise a rotating shutter pierced by a narrow slot and a magnifying glass for direct viewing. Edison's Kinetoscope (1893), of which there is an example in the wall-case, comes within the same category, as it employs a continuously-moving film glimpsed through a rotating slotted shutter. We can, in fact, follow up our evolutionary analogies by thinking of these editing machines as primitive types of organism descended through the Kinetoscope from the optical-illusion toys and surviving in small numbers under specialised conditions.

Principle of Intermittent Movement

We now come to our next epoch—that of the Mutoscope peepshow. We have seen that one way of preventing a string of images from fusing into a streak is to view it through a series of narrow slits. Another solution of the problem lies along different lines. Our slits gave us an image which bordered on stillness because it did not have much time in

which to move. But it was equally true that the mind did not have much time in which to receive a clear impression. Therefore it is to be anticipated that better results would be obtained if each image could be actually immobilised for a brief period and then hastily hurried out of sight. This is the principle of intermittent movement on which the apparatus of to-day is based. The mutoscope device really provides a very rough sort of intermittent movement. It consists of a sheaf of pictures forced past a retaining catch so that each picture clings to the catch for a moment before it is forced round and drops out of sight. In the wall-case are displayed a hand-executed contrivance of this type—the Kineograph—dating from 1868 and a Mutoscope machine for displaying photographs—the Kinora—dating from 1895. Mutoscope machines still survive in small numbers, eking out a somewhat degraded existence in places of public resort.

Lantern as Direct Ancestor of Cinema

As I have already indicated, we must regard both the slotted peep-hole type of machine and the Mutoscope as branches only in the main trend of motion-picture development. Neither method favoured long displays or large pictures. A large moving picture implies the use of projection because you cannot juggle with large pictures, taking them down and putting them up several times a second, but you can juggle with large projected images. The projected image has no weight. The source of the image has weight, of course, but that can be kept so small as not to matter. So it is the projection-lantern which must be regarded as the direct ancestor of the cinema. Projection lanterns date back at any rate well into the 18th century. In a floor-case in the main optical gallery may be seen reproductions of plates from a book—Zahn's *Oculus Artificialis*, dated 1702—showing early magic lanterns. Projection from the instantaneous-glimpse type of machine is hindered both by the low illumination obtainable and by the fact that such unwanted movement as does take place during showing is magnified on the screen. Projection from a Mutoscope would be hindered by lack of clear focus because the pictures do not stay flat in one definite plane. So the first efforts towards making a projection-lantern which would portray movement involved devices flinging ordinary glass lantern slides in front of the lens, stopping them suddenly, and starting them off again suddenly. Two such devices may be seen in the gallery, the 'choreutoscope' in the wall-case and Rudge's lantern (1875) near the Muybridge exhibits. The intermittent shifting of heavy glass slides must have given rise to the most unseemly rattling, but the interesting point about these two machines is the resemblance in principle of their intermittent mechanism to a Maltese cross. In fact, it is said to have been the Rudge lantern which inspired Friese-Greene with the idea of a projector employing an intermittently-driven flexible ribbon.

H.D.W.

The second article of this series, "The Evolution of the Cinema Camera," will follow in the next number.

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This is a very neatly designed joining-press for 16mm. silent and sound (both standards) 8mm. and 9.5mm. films. The action of the emulsion-scraper is checked by a stop so that it cannot bite into the film and the closing of the press automatically trims the end of the film. The pins which enter the perforations and position the film are staggered in order to ensure adequate guidance from the single row of perforations. The cost of the splicer is £2 15s.

S.P. 16mm SOUND-ON-FILM PROJECTOR; Sales Producers Ltd., 13/14, Golden Square, W.1.

In a recent number of *SIGHT AND SOUND* some preliminary particulars of this machine were given, but I had not at that time had the opportunity of attending a demonstration. I have now had this opportunity and was impressed by the quality both of picture and sound. As the use of a synchronous motor is avoided with a view to obtaining correct speed for silent as well as sound films, a certain amount of preliminary running for purposes of warming up is required before the machine settles down to steady running. In most circumstances this would not be an appreciable drawback.

R.C.A. 16mm. SOUND CAMERA, R.C.A. Electra House, Victoria Embankment, W.C.2.

The purchaser of this camera is presented with two alternatives, he can either limit himself to running commentary, in which case he only requires the amazingly compact camera with a mouthpiece in its back, or he can buy in addition the microphone and amplifying gear which go with the same camera, in which case he is fully equipped for every kind of sound-recording which the user of sub-standard film is likely to desire. Even the latter outfit is a triumph of portability. Arrangements are provided for fixing the amplifiers on each side of the camera when a tripod is being used, or they can be worn on a belt when the camera is being held in the hand. Volume control is provided and an indicator shows a warning light if the beam is overshooting the width of the track. From the point of view of pure design there is something delightfully simple about a piece of sound-recording apparatus which contains no electrical contrivances except a small lamp lighted by three little dry cells. But I think that anyone who remains satisfied with facilities for talking into the back of his camera while he shoots is somewhat unambitious. The company describe pictures taken in this way as being 'of news-reel type.' But clearly this analogy cannot be pressed too far. The average news-reel man finds himself sufficiently occupied without improvising a commentary while he works, and there are a good many cameramen who would be quite embarrassed by a camera which automatically recorded their impromptu ejaculations. However, the purchaser of the simplest type who subsequently decides to add the microphone attachment to his equipment will not be paying more for his total outfit than if he had decided to buy the microphone instrument at the outset.

The extraordinary portability and comparative cheapness of the microphone-equipped model should give it a wide range of application in serious documentary work. But if any amateur is definitely certain that he will never afford the microphone attachment then I should imagine he would be unwilling to sacrifice the facilities for speed variation which most silent cameras offer to the ability to record an improvised commentary.

In its simplest form the sound-camera costs £130, the microphone and amplifying attachment cost £90.

H.D.W.

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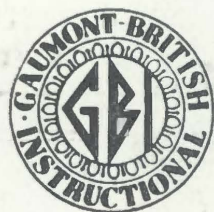
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